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Timothy Tuohy
Another year older

Julio Soto
Another year wiser

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John Stack
Another year still driving Miss Daisy-er

Bob Harras
Another year slinky-er

Jim (Ski) Sokolowski
Another year Highland-ier

Shirrel Rhoades
Another year Diet Coke-ier

## Where does it all go?
## Can somebody please tell me?!

I'm sitting at home writing this, and it still really hasn't sunk in yet. I'm actually writing the 25th VISION editorial. Two very full and very fun-filled years on this book, and I still get excited picking up each new bound copy. VISION has gone through some dramatic changes in those two years: the look, writers and writing styles, square-bound to staples, price and design. Yes, I remember all the flak those early issues got, but hey, ya can't make an omelet unless you crack a couple of eggs.

For those of you who have been counting, and you know who you are, 25 issues of VISION breaks down to 1,648 pages, 437,750 words and 16 calls to the Kubert boys begging for that Time Slip poster! Ah, well.

1998 looks to be an even better year for VISION than 1997. The magazine has finally gone to the newsstand market, and we're contacting even more writers to bring you a whole new look at your favorites and many others that will become your new favorites. VISION gets to cover more Star Trek than ever, because I'm a self-serving kind-of-guy and Julio gets to suffer through my bad impression of Worf from First Contact—"Perhaps today is a good day to die!" You've gotta imagine the low guttural growl and...forget it.

On the downside, I've got another year of dodging that amazing flying dictionary that Bob Harras seems to launch with such accuracy.

Well, whatever 1998 brings, let's find out together, shall we?

I'm done. (Not by a long shot!)

Tim Tuohy

Stan Lee Presents

# marvel vision

#25 january nineteen ninety-eight

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**MARVEL VISION™ Vol. 1, No. 25 January 1998.** (ISSN# 1093-0817) Published by MARVEL COMICS, Joseph Calamari, President, Shirrel Rhoades, Executive VP Publishing, Stan Lee, Publisher. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, NY 10016. PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, NY AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES. Published monthly.


Copyright © 1997 Marvel Characters, Inc. All rights reserved.


Price $1.99 per copy in the U.S. and $2.80 in Canada. Subscription rate for 12 issues: $35.88 U.S.; Canadian subscribers must add $10.00 for postage and GST. GST #R127032852; $30.00 Foreign.


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POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO MARVEL VISION, c/o MARVEL DIRECT MARKETING INC./SUBSCRIPTION DEPT., P.O. BOX 1979, DANBURY, CT 06813-1979. TELEPHONE # (203) 743-5331. Printed in Canada.

# MARVEL VISION insights

Tim,

First off, let me say that I am impressed with the progress that Marvel VISION has made in its two years of existence. The quality has steadily improved from looking like an underground newspaper (sorry) to a first-rate publication. Getting all the bugs worked out took a little time, but you are to be commended for the fine job that you have done.

All accolades aside, I feel the need to point out an error that you made in the letters pages in issue #21. Someone asked who had the black costume first, Spider-Man or Spiderwoman II. You said Spider-Man. That was incorrect. While Spider-Man was the first one seen wearing the costume in comics, Spiderwoman II actually had the design first.

Mat Dunham
dunham.26@osu.edu

**Thanks for the words of encouragement, Mat. Julio and I are continuing to explore new ways to push our writers and designers to keep bringing you the best Marvel fan magazine ever.**

**And, yes, you weren't the only one that spotted that little goof. I was off by one issue. Spider-Man's black costume appeared in issue #8 of SECRET WARS, while Spiderwoman showed up in #7.**

**Mat tried for a No-Prize by just explaining the issue order. To qualify for a No-Prize we need a reason as to why I screwed up. And no, "Tim's stupid" won't win you anything.**

**Anybody out there game?**

Hi Tim,

I just wanted to send heaps of praise and encouragement to the most underrated part of your magazine: Marvel Chronicles! Not a single letter has mentioned this wonderful project (imagine the amount of research that must have been conducted!) that fills in so many gaps in my ever-expanding knowledge of the Marvel Universe.

Aside from the pure facts, there's also a lot of "inside info" on life in the bullpen from whoever it is that's writing and researching it!

Emil Josefson
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**We'll be sure to pass on your compliments to Chronicle scribe Peter Sanderson. His tireless efforts and seemingly endless knowledge of the Marvel Universe are a joy to read each month. We hope you fans agree. It's great to know where Marvel's going but it's just as important to know where we've been.**

Mr. Tuohy,

I've been a big Marvel fan since I began reading comics, but of late I've begun to feel actual ill will towards you guys. I've been passing over Marvels that I would have bought a year ago and buying titles from other publishers that once I wouldn't have given a second glance.

How did it come to this? Marvel has made several disappointing and frustrating moves in the last year or so.

My favorite titles and characters have all but vanished. Both of the added FF books, all the 2099 titles, Warlock, Ben Reilly—all have gotten the ax.

The only title I now subscribe to—FANTASTIC FOUR—has featured somewhat lackluster stories, in spite of the acclaim "Heroes Reborn" has received. There hasn't been a letters page in it for almost a year, either.

Perhaps worst of all are the unnecessary price hikes—first for 8 pages of Marvel ads, then for a gatefold cover on every book. How on Earth can you justify charging readers extra for self-promoting junk? And I could get along fine without a summary of the characters and plots in a title.

There've been some bright spots, sure—ULTRAGIRL and SILVER SURFER among the brightest—but it really seems like Marvel is getting rid of everything I like and offering up nothing that I want.

Of course, you aren't in business to please me. But if I'm not the only reader dissatisfied with Marvel's current direction, you'll never know unless someone says something.

Matt Kuhns
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**You're absolutely right, Matt. This letters page isn't here for a monthly back-slapping, good-job-boys reason. It's here to let readers express their opinion on Marvel.**

**Cancellations are always a difficult pill to swallow. All of the titles that you mention had very low sales and to continue printing them would've cost more money than we were making on them.**

**Ben Reilly, and everybody who reads this column knows how the VISION office feels about Ben, was the victim of public outcry. We heard you, but the majority won out on that one.**

**As for the extra pages in the back, they were a valiant idea but maybe were done at the wrong time. However, see issue #27's editorial for some thoughts on just that subject.**

**The gatefolds have been very widely praised and well received by fans and retailers alike.**

**Your opinion is important and we really want to know exactly what's on your mind.**

Dear Insights,

I read Marvel VISION every month and find it quite a good read for the price. It's good to find information about upcoming projects. So of course when I heard about Man-Thing getting an ongoing series, I rushed to Marvel VISION but could not find any mention of it. "Maybe I'm going crazy," I thought, so I rushed back to previews. It's in there, I'm not crazy.

Please tell me why is it not mentioned in VISION.

Trevor McGuire
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**It wasn't mentioned due to an honest mistake on our part. If you noticed, all of the solicits for Strange Tales titles and the manga books were omitted. This matter was actually only brought to my attention after issue #24 left for the printer, and it was too late to change it there as well.**

**Rest assured, problems like that will only be few and very**

**far between. As a consolation, this issue's Chronicles has information on the original MAN-THING series, and look for an upcoming Origin of the Species to deal with our swamp monster.**

Dear Insights,

First of all, I would like to say that your magazine is awesome. I started collecting at issue #18, so I am still new to this magazine. The price is good, and I love the Time Slip and the Beast Files. Of course, my day or month is not complete without reading the finest newspaper, the Daily Bugle. I love to read X-MEN, X-FACTOR, WOLVERINE, and especially GENERATION X!!! They are the coolest team ever!

Now, I have some questions for you great people:

1) Will Blink be brought back anytime soon?

2) Have you guys done a Beast Files on Spider-Man?

3) Is there going to be a new character in Generation X?

Well, thanks for your time and keep up the good work.

Leo Chan
LChan88871

**Ah, some good old- fashioned questions.**

**1) No. There are no plans to bring Blink back.**

**2) Yes, there was a Beast Files on Spider-Man in issue #15.**

**3) You never know what's going to happen in GEN X, so we suggest you just keep reading!**

TIMM2E,

As a very loyal reader of Marvel comics, it has come to my attention that two of my favorites comics, X-FACTOR and EXCALIBUR, are being discussed as possible cancellations. I urge Marvel to rethink this idea.

I know that fans are complaining about the number of X-titles that are currently appearing on comic shelves. I also know that these two books are the lowest selling books of the X-family of titles. However, cancellation of these books, only to have them be replaced by two more X-titles, will not solve the dilemma of too many X-titles. Profit should not be the only consideration. Both X-FACTOR and EXCALIBUR are well written books (even though I must say how disturbing and grotesque I find the art in X-Factor to be.)

The characters in X-FACTOR are complex and interesting. Mystique and Forge have always been great. But with the combination of Wildchild, Shard and Polaris, the mix can only get better as time goes by.

Excalibur is also a fine mix of old favorites: Colossus, Kitty and Nightcrawler with those who I knew much less about. Plus, with their base of operations in England, it is like experiencing a cross-cultural life every month (okay, I'm spreading it on a little thick here! But what can I say, I love the book!!!)

I am begging and pleading with Marvel. Please do not let these books go the way of other great books, such as NEW WARRIORS (which was another greatly written book that was canceled due to sales). Is there a pattern that I am detecting here?

Paulette Adams
(Address withheld by request)

**As far as we know, there are no plans to cancel either of these books. Kelly Corvese and Jason White have taken over the editorial reins on EXCALIBUR. They have a lot of experience with the X Universe since they're the editors of X-FACTOR.**

**Stick around and see what happens.**

Dear VISION,

I am writing to express my thanks to the Marvel family—creators, artists and everyone involved—for just doing what they do. The reason is that for the past two years I have been ill with anorexia and depression, and sometimes I just needed to escape, leave for another place. Within the Marvel Universe, I found it. I am not saying that comics cured me or that they are anything but stories, but sometimes when things were too much or I couldn't sleep, reading the adventures of my favorite characters in a small way helped me a lot.

I believe the creative teams should just know that someone out there really appreciates what they do to make everything enjoyable for us readers.

I am, believe it or not, a very happy person although my topic may seem deep. In the world today illnesses should not be taboos, though I would sincerely understand if this letter did not see print due to its possible contrast to the usual brilliant array of letters (that I really enjoy reading).

The main aim of this letter is to thank the Marvel group for what you do. Keep doing it, cause you're the best at it.

D.T. Witchell
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**You're welcome!**

Dear Tim,

I just wanted to say that you folks put out a great magazine. For a company book, it sports a lot of unbiased (for the most part) and valid views and opinions on your part. I enjoy reading the letters page the most, because unlike some other magazines, you don't mock and ridicule the fans' questions and/or opinions. Instead, you answer them with honest answers to the best of your knowledge. I especially liked it when you stood up and defended the late Ben Reilly, instead of supporting the decision Marvel made to have him killed. This shows that you have a mind of your own and you are not afraid to speak it, instead of acting like a company lapdog, shamelessly cheering whatever the higher-ups at Marvel do. This prompted me to write to you, knowing that my ideas will be treated with some semblance of respect.

I heard that VISION was in the process of being updated, so I thought I'd throw out some suggestions:

1) I really like the feature "Greatest Comics Never Seen," but instead of devoting that feature to POGS, why not go straight to the horse's mouth (writers/editors) to find out about some cool stories or story ideas that a writer might've had, but they never saw print.

2) Have you given any thought to adding an ongoing monthly column, written by a comic professional who's well-known and has made significant contributions to the comics industry and Marvel over the years. Again, Chris Claremont comes to mind. I heard that Peter David writes something like this for CBG; why not have something like that for VISION?

John Abelcopp
(Address withheld by request)

**Thanks for the letter and**

**suggestions. Your idea for Greatest sounds good; but we would like to show art that went with that story. Sometimes in our interviews, creators will tell such stories. The whole thing behind Greatest was that we actually had something to show, so that's why it took the form that it did.**

**VISION, for the first three issues, actually had the great Fabian Nicieza doing a guest column when he left staff, but he had to end it due to his ever increasing workload. Then he became the editor in chief of Acclaim Comics; guess he found something better. Right, Fabe.**

**Seriously, with so many top creators dedicating a good portion of their time to their books, it doesn't seem fair to ask them to do a column in their spare time. But...you never know with this book.**

TIMM2E,

I hope you enjoyed your Labor Day weekend. I will never trouble you again, master of many alternate realities, but I need to know if I am correct about something. In the past couple months in UNCANNY X-MEN they have hinted that Gambit was part of the Mutant Massacre. I feel that perhaps he was the Marauder named Harpoon. This villain could charge objects with energy just like Gambit. If this is true he is responsible for Angel's wings getting taken, quite literally off.

I know you can't say directly but please give me a hint, or tell me who to E-mail with my conspiracy theory (hold the Mel Gibson but extra Julia Roberts...please). Thank you again, o' Insight-ful one.

Christopher S. Chu
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**We honestly don't know. I don't think the X office is sure at this point, but if we knew we wouldn't say. We're not that crazy.**

Dear Insights,

I wasn't sure where to post this letter, so I figured it'd be best posted to you.

A while back WIZARD had an interview with Chris Claremont, and he mentioned that, if he was still writing X-Men, he would have taken it in vastly different directions. I was thinking that it'd be really cool if Chris wrote an X-MEN oneshot or limited series about the way he would have taken the X-Men — kind of a WHAT IF? Claremont hadn't left X-MEN.

I think this would really sell to Claremont fans from both his old and new work, and with it being X-Men... well, I'll say no more on that. I'll let you guys think it over.

I really like your magazine; my fave bit is the extended letters page—always good to read the thoughts of other fans, and your editorial and groovy tags on the "cast" of contributors in the credits.

Cat Smith
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**Marvel was in talks with Chris, but they seemed to stall on a myriad of issues. We'd always welcome any contribution that Chris could make and look forward to developing a relationship with him in the future.**

Hi, Tim,

Just wanted to tell you I loved the cover of the latest Marvel VISION. George Pérez is the man, and I'm very excited about Heroes Return (now if only they picked up the old numbering... *sigh*...) My only complaint is having to wait till next month for the scoop on AVENGERS (my favorite title) and CAP!

I also wanted to point out that I really like the new binding and format that Marvel VISION has had in recent months. They're much easier to keep in good shape and make the book a lot better in my opinion.

Finally, I was the poor schmuck you stuck "Zabu the lion" on the back of at the Marvel Games in San Diego, so you'd better be nice to me! You all did a great job, I had a lot of fun. (Especially when that smart aleck kid kept saying garbage and you taped his mouth shut—and then, to add salt to the wound, gave him a Liefeld AVENGERS as a prize! That was mean!) I really hope you do the Marvel Games again next year. I also hope Marvel plans another memorial tribute panel for Mark Gruenwald next year; one can never tire of the many great books Mark did. Aso, when you get right down to it, Mark was one of the great unsung heroes of comics. He seemed to love what he did and through his many contributions (especially THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE), he really made a great impact on comics. I only met the man once, but I really felt sadness at the panel, perhaps because I could see the impact he made on so many people.

Craig Byrne
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Annapolis, MD 21401

**My thanks for remembering all the fun at the Games Panel. I hope to do it again. A word of warning to all those potential hecklers. I'm going to have an even bigger roll of tape next year. Maybe that really nasty duct tape...yeah!**

**We all still miss the Gru very much, and it's too early to tell if there will be another memorial panel, but if you get the chance to meet one-on-one with any creator out there, we're sure they have a Gru story they'd love to tell!**

Hey Tim!

Congratulations on keeping VISION alive and interesting!

Enough of that, I have a few comments on Heroes Return and other morsels!

I am looking forward to Heroes Return with great anticipation. Heroes Reborn was a ridiculous waste of a year as far as I'm concerned; there's no nicer way for me to put it! Jim Lee couldn't empty someone like John or Sal Buscema's pencil sharpener, and forget about Liefeld! Well, enough bashing! I just want Marvel to know where this reader is coming from. I'm 29. I've been collecting comics since 1974 with an issue of MARVEL DOUBLE FEATURE featuring Cap and Iron Man. My favorite comics characters have been and are Captain America, the Incredible Hulk, the invincible Iron Man, and the Micronauts! I'm glad to see most of my favorites returning to regular continuity.

That's it for now. I'll get to my other comments another day! Keep up the great work, Tim!

Al Burr
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**We're really excited about Heroes Return as much as you, Al. It'll be great having all those heroes back and interacting**

**in the universe they were made for and belong in.**

**Julio and I like the Micronauts so much that we're working on their return for 1998. So be on the lookout and watch where you step. They're really small, those Micronauts. Really, really...**

**(Tim, get on with it you dope.— Julio)**

**Uh, right.**

VISION Guys,

Thank you, thank you, thank you. I saw the other day that Marvel will be releasing MOON KNIGHT as a limited series. With the number of new books that you are putting out, it will be nice to have a good story about a character I like, without having to make a longterm investment. To be honest, this is probably the only way I will pick this book up. Please consider this format for some of the other books you have in mind for the future. I'm far more likely to pick up limited series about a variety of characters than to start reading several new ongoing series.

We don't all have Tony Stark's wallet!

Keep up the good work,

Thomas Salley
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**Moon Knight is coming back and look for more limited series in the future. One that we can definitely tell you about is STAR TREK: UNTOLD VOYAGES, premiering in January 1998. This series tells the story of Captain Kirk and his crew as they took the U.S.S. Enterprise out on their second five-year mission. The action picks up right before the end of "Star Trek: The Motion Picture." Don't miss it!**


**U.S. POSTAL SERVICE STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION**
(REQUIRED BY 39 U.S.C. 3685)

1. Publication Title: MARVEL VISION 2. Publication No.: 015-041 3. Filing Date: October 1, 1997
4. Issue Frequency: MONTHLY 5. No. of issues published annually: 12
6. Annual subscription price: $23.88/12 issues
7. Complete mailing address of known office of publication: 387 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10016. Contact Person: Thomas Mathew: (212) 576-4088
8. Complete mailing address of headquarters of general business office of Publisher: Same.
9. Full names and complete mailing addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor: Stan Lee, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. Editor: Timothy Tuohy, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10016. Managing Editor: N/A.
10. Owner (If owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give the names and addresses of the individual owners. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as those of each individual owner. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, give its name and address.) Approximately 79% of the Common Stock of Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. is owned indirectly through wholly-owned subsidiaries by Marvel Parent Holdings Inc., and the balance of Marvel's Common Stock is publicly owned. The shares of Marvel's Common Stock are listed for trading on the New York Stock Exchange. Complete Mailing Address: Marvel Parent Holdings Inc. 5900 North Andrews Ave., Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309.
11. Known bondholders, mortgages, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities. If none, check box ❏ None.
12. Tax Status For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at special rates. (Check one.) The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for Federal income tax purposes.: ❏Has not changed during preceding 12 months. ❏Has changed during preceding 12 months. (Publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement)
13. Publication Title: MARVEL VISIONS
14. Issue date for circulation data below: SEPTEMBER
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation

A. Total No. Copies Printed (net press run): Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 52,165. Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 51,000.
B. Paid and/or requested Circulation: 1) Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 49,192. Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 40,000. 2) Paid or requested mail subscriptions: Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 427. Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 650.
C. Total Paid and/or requested Circulation (sum of 15B(1) and 15B(2)): Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months:49,619. Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 50,650.
D. Free Distribution by mail (samples, complimentary, and other free): Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 43. Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 65.
E. Free Distribution outside the mail: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 0. Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 0.
F. Total Free Distribution (Sum of 15D and 15E): Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 43. Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 65.
G. Total Distribution (Sum of 15C, 15F): Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 49,662. Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 40,715.
H. Copies not distributed (1) Office use, leftovers, Spoiled: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 125. Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 125. (2) Returns from News Agents: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 2,378. Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 10,160.
I. Total (Sum of 15G, 15H(1), and 15H(2)): Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 52,165. Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 51,000.
Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation (15C / 15G x 100): Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 99. Actual no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 99.

16. Publication of Statement of Ownership: ❏Publication required. Will be printed in the January issue of this publication. ❏Publication not required.
17. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner: Armida Fuentes, Marketing Coordinator 10/1/97

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**New York NY 10016.**
**Or E-Mail to: TIMM2E@ aol.com**
**Addresses will be withheld at the writer's request.**

**Thanks for writing and e-mailing!**

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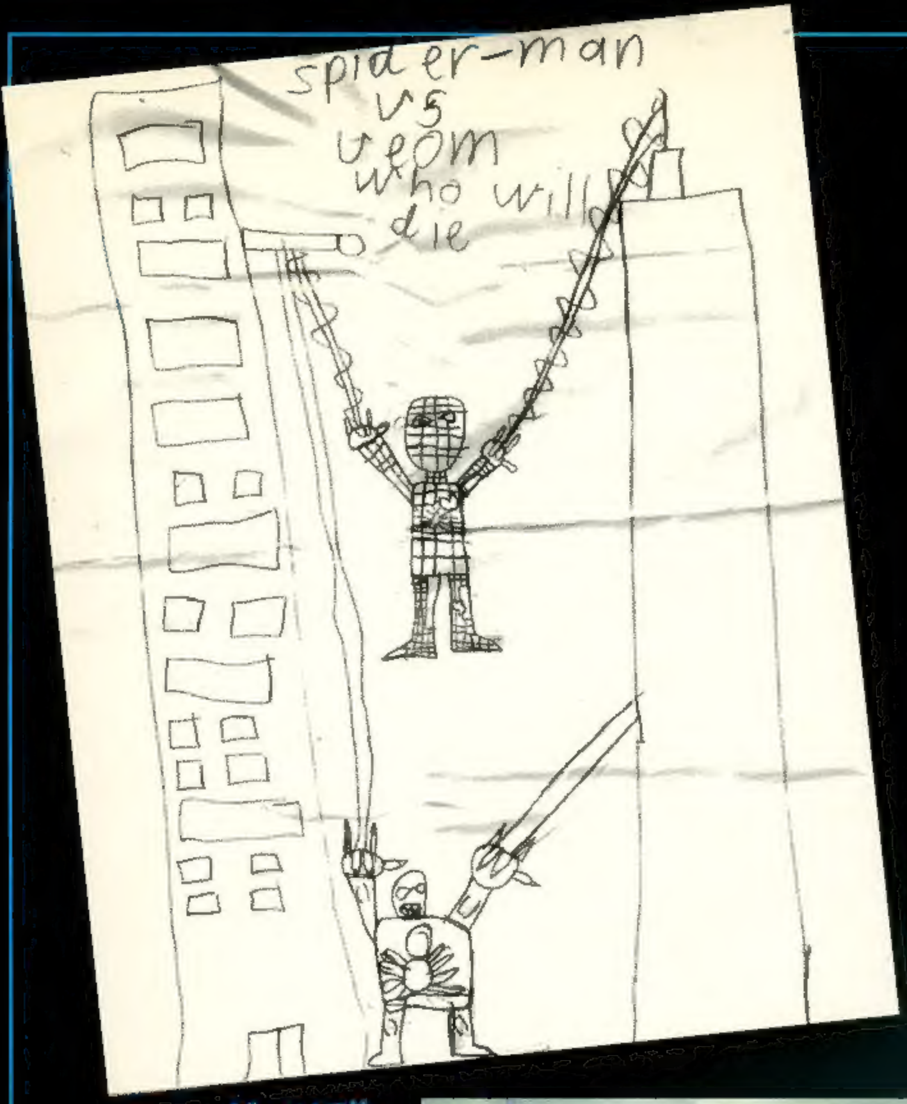
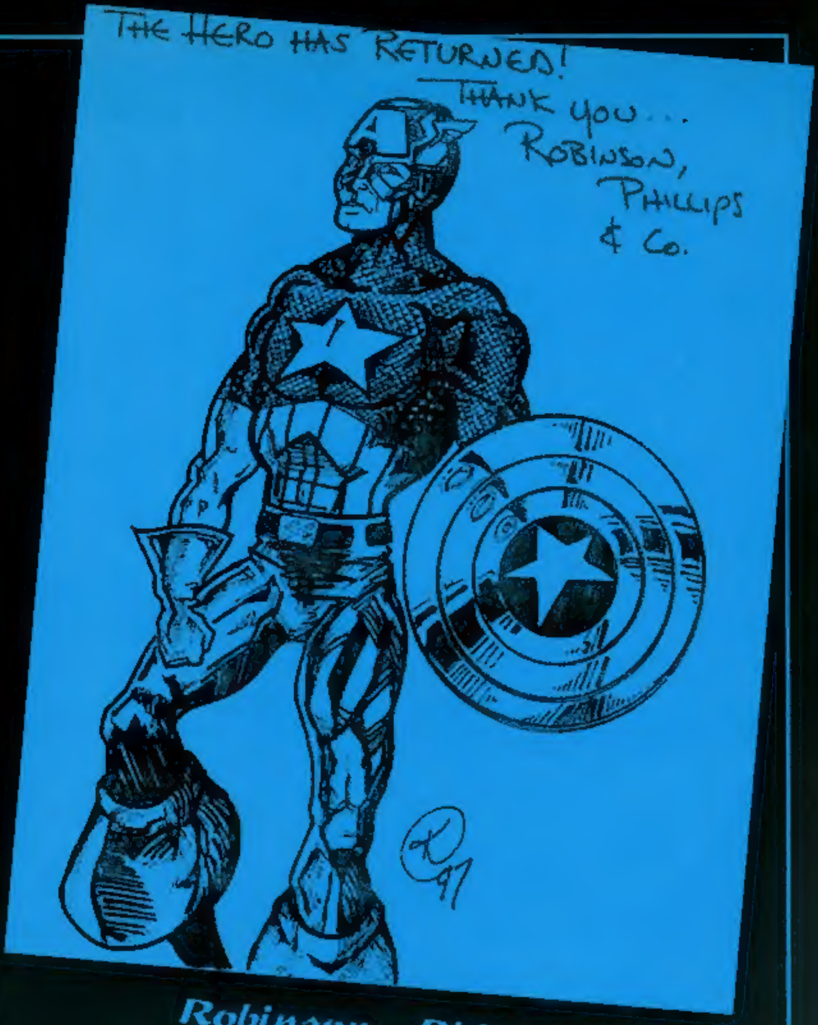



Tim Hamer
age 7

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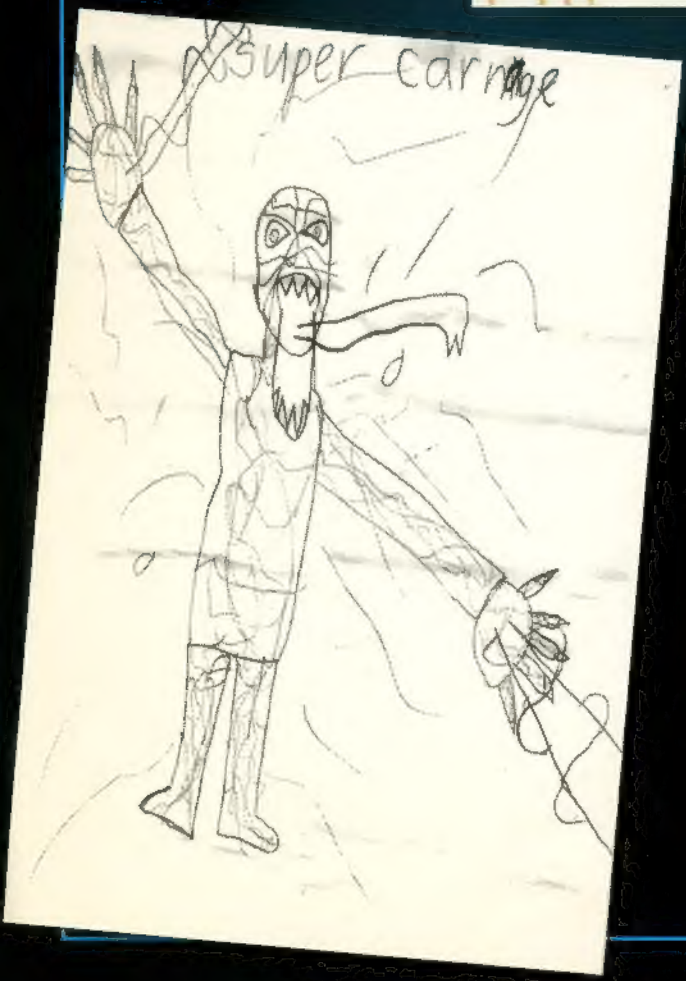


# VISION FAN ART

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age 7

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# FROM ALPHA 2 X-MEN

## Steven Seagle Spills His Guts on Bowling with Chris Bachalo, Being Mistaken for a Hollywood Action Hero, and the Most Coveted Writing Assignment in the Entire Galaxy.

*Just to clue everybody in, can you list your current writing credits?*

Sure. We got your UNCANNY X-MEN, we got your ALPHA FLIGHT, we got your SANDMAN MYSTERY THEATER and last but not least, we got your HOUSE OF SECRETS.

*ObieKaybie. So what sparked your love of comics?*

Actually, when I was really young I liked books and plays better than comics. Then in junior high school my best friend Eric—who I still know today—started collecting comics and I thought well, he's my best friend so I'd better get into comics too. So I went out and bought UNCANNY X-MEN and MARVEL PREMIERE. That's how it all began!

*Where did you learn how to write comic books?*

When I was in college all of my electives were writing classes. One specific thing that a writing teacher taught me was that no matter what, you have to write every day. It's got to be the same time each day and it's got to be 5 days a week minimum. No excuses. And [just] thinking [instead] doesn't count; that time has got to be spent writing. That helped me more than anything because it gave me the ability to work regularly.

*How did you break into the industry?*

When Eric and I were in college I kept telling him, "I could write this stuff." Finally, he challenged me to "Prove it." So I sent off a proposal for a series called KAFKA, and it was bought by Renegade Press. It was kind of freaky but it worked out okay. KAFKA was actually nominated for an Eisner Award and because of the attention it received, I was asked to do a series for Comico soon after called THE AMAZON with Tim Sale. From there I snagged a Grendel story and then began working on SANDMAN MYSTERY THEATER.

Of course, this all sounds good condensed but after Comico went bankrupt I quit comics entirely. I became a College Speech Communications Professor teaching speech, argumentation, and interpersonal communication. Teaching actually influenced my writing quite a bit. Interpersonal Communication is about relationships and how they're governed and bound by communication. That affects the way I write dialogue more than any writing course I ever took.

*When did you decide to get back into comics?*

After about 5 years of teaching I had moved back to California and fellow writer James Robinson suggested I get back in to it. He introduced me to some people and just as quickly as I'd dropped out, I was suddenly overworked.

*Who are your influences?*

During my formative years I read mostly Frank Miller and Chris Claremont, so they're the main comic writers. Outside of comics, I read a lot of short stories by people like Ron Carlson. I also like Paul Theroux's style of prose. Other than that I read a lot of avant garde stuff that most people have never and will never hear of. The reason for that is, if I'm going to sit and read something I want it to be something that's the furthest from my work.

*Let's talk about your newest project. You can't get any bigger than UNCANNY X-MEN. How's it feel?*

When I found out I called my mom and told her, "I'm on the top book in the country." Then I realized, "Well, it's downhill from here." (Laughs)

*How tough was it to give up WOLVERINE to make room in your schedule for UNCANNY?*

Writing WOLVERINE was a chance to write my childhood hero. I read all the back issues and had gone through everything when Mark [Editor, Mark Powers] called me to do UNCANNY. Now, in my mind Logan is part of the X-Men as well as his own guy and UNCANNY was one of the very first comics I had ever bought. Regardless, I still turned UNCANNY down because I had done all that work for

WOLVERINE. But when they told me that Chris [Bachalo] was coming on UNCANNY, I had no choice. I had to do it.

*Have you ever worked together before?*

I've bowled with Chris but never worked with him. I've known him for a while and we see each other once a year and say, "Why aren't we working together?" and then we never do. This year it just clicked.

*What is your favorite X-storyline to date?*

That's such a hard thing to nail down. UNCANNY is the top book for a reason: it's never been in shoddy hands. I can see how different parts would be favorite runs for different people. However, I'm a huge fan of the Roy Thomas/Neal Adams run. I also loved the "Dark Phoenix Saga" because at the time, I was this impressionable young guy who couldn't believe they did something like that. The death of a major hero just seemed impossible to me back then. It blew my mind.

*Which X-Man do you enjoy writing the most?*

I've always loved Nightcrawler, but he's not even in the X-Men anymore. The truth of the matter is I'm finding so much more in the characters I didn't think I would be into. For example, Rogue. I always liked her enough but for the most part I was like, "Yeah, whatever." And now I'm really getting a jazz on writing her. She's really an interesting character.

*Is there a particular X-Man you feel has been underused that you would like to bring back into the spotlight?*

(Laughs) I keep calling Mark up saying "What about Dazzler?" I don't really know why, but I have this morbid fascination with Alison Blaire so maybe we'll be seeing her somewhere down the line.

*What is your opinion of the dark cloud hanging over the X-characters as of late?*

I think everybody knows the darkness is there. The real question is, do we like it or not. X-MEN writer Joe [Kelly], Editor-in Chief Bob [Harras], Mark, assistant editor Jason [Liebig], and I are all pretty much in agreement that this is a book that can't escape that darkness because of its premise. However, what's missing—I think—is the humanity of these characters. Not that they're not human but I don't think it's been as much in the forefront as it could be. When everything is on an enormous scale, you lose the human side of it. We're going to make the book light by bringing back the human qualities so that there is a balance to all the enormity taking place around the X-Men.

*How else will your approach to UNCANNY differ from the way previous writers handled things?*

One thing I don't do is approach existing books as if my job is to totally recreate them. I think it's important to realize that the reason the X-Men have been popular for such a long time is the fact that people liked what was happening in the book. However, I do think the stories were a little out of control in terms of length so I'll shorten them a bit. I'll also fine-tune characters and play with story narrative structures more because that's my style. Aside from that, it would be presumptuous of me to say that UNCANNY X-MEN is broken so I'd better fix it. The truth of it is, if it were broken it wouldn't be the top book.

*Will there be a definite division of characters between X-MEN and UNCANNY?*

Well, all the characters will appear in both books, but Joe Kelly and I will be focusing on specific X-Men. I'll be doing a lot of stuff with Rogue, Jean and Scott, and Wolverine. Joe will be focusing more on the newer characters and Storm.

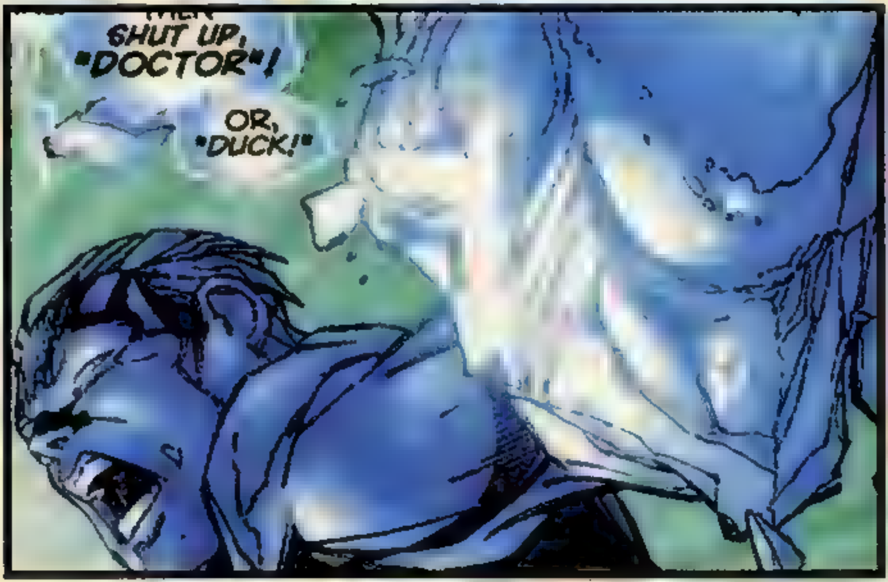
*Can you drop any hints as to what fans can look forward to following the trial of Gambit?*

I'm not really a big hint dropper. I like the idea of fans not knowing everything that's between the covers until they're actually reading the issue. What I will say is that issue #351 will be a Dr. Reyes solo story where she tries to leave the team. Then #352 will see Scott and Jean relocate to Alaska and something happens to them on the way because . . . well . . . they're Scott and Jean. Incidentally, they'll leave the team for a while but we'll still be following their adventures. Then issue #353 will be Chris's first and that's really where we set the new tone of our tenure on the book.

*All right, let's move on to Alpha Flight. That turned into a smashing success, but was there a part of you that feared wide-scale rejection from readers?*

I didn't think it would sell on a bet! But I was surprised at how many Alpha Flight fans there were still out there. That got me energized.

*With Alpha Flight you were pretty much able to pick and choose what characters you wanted to work with*



*and their situation, but with UNCANNY, the line-up and current story arc pretty much set. Which scenario proved to be more of a challenge?*

I think it's always easier to step into something that's working than to recreate something that wasn't. Alpha Flight was a little harder not only because I had to make a lot of choices but because I had to make them very quickly. By the time it was decided that I would do that book, it was due. With the UNCANNY storylines already moving it's initially a matter of maintenance, really.

*Are you at all intimidated by your new responsibilities?*

No. I know the X-Men because I read the series for so many years. If I were to start writing, say, SUPERMAN, that would intimidate me because I'm not into the character. But in this case, I feel like I was invited into my old house and given a chance to rearrange the furniture; I know where these characters are coming from.

*How do you go about coming up with story ideas?*

I tend to be structure oriented as opposed to character oriented first. I think about the form and shape of the story before anything else. I usually sit down with a piece of graph paper which I divide into three columns: one column per issue because I plot in three- issue chunks. Then I plot those issues fairly quickly, allowing about a half sentence per comic page. That lets me look at how the scenes stack up. Then I rework it until I'm happy.

*What is your favorite part of the writing process?*

I think the best thing is when you read an issue that you've written and it surprises you.

*Have you ever run into anyone that, after seeing your name, thought you were a pony-tailed action movie star?*

I actually have two stories about that. When I was 14 or so I turned on *Entertainment Tonight* and they were talking about this new star, Steven Seagal, and his action movie. I was like, "Oh my God!" because I'm a pretty thin guy and he was this muscled, monosyllabic hero type. I secretly wanted the movie to vanish quickly. Of course, it was a huge hit. That's when I realized I would be living with it forever. And here it is many years down the road and I still can't use my Visa card without hearing "Wow, you look smaller in person."

Also, lately I've been getting these messages on my answering machine: "Errr, hi. This is Ted and . . . uhm . . . I want to join the Steven Seagal Fan Club. My address is ..." As if Steven Seagal the actor would be listed in Directory Assistance.

*...And run his own fan club to boot!*

Exactly. (in a mock Steven Seagal voice) "This is Steven, I've signed you up. That'll be $25." I don't know what that's all about but I hope he gets calls from people asking X-Men questions. Now that would be justice!

**by Robert Piotrowski**

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# DAILY BUGLE®

November 10, 1997 | New York's Finest Daily Newspaper | Fifty Cents


**IN THIS ISSUE**
Ben Grimm's rocky past with the Fantastic Four.
Page B1

# ALPHA FLIGHT MEMBER GOES BERSERK

Staff Photo Chuck Giambalvo

## Sasquatch spreads terror across the Tundra

**Jan Parsec -BUGLE**

Manitoba, Canada—The pride and elation that the people of Canada recently experienced over the re-formation of their first and only super hero team was significantly diminished yesterday after one of its members apparently became berserk and went on a rampage.

Sasquatch, who rejoined the team just weeks ago, reportedly turned on his teammates, broke out of the group's complex and began spreading terror across the Tundra. Alpha Flight's diminutive, longstanding member, Puck immediately went in pursuit of Sasquatch. The incident has brought to life the old gag stories of the Sasquatch or Bigfoot spreading terror among the Rockies, and this story is certain to create volumes of fodder for the tabloid papers, which is the last thing the Canadian government wanted to see.

The decision to bring the Alpha Flight project back on-line after a hiatus of several years was met with much surprise and some concern following a relationship characterized as love/hate between the Canadian government and the previous incarnation of the team. At one point, the original Alpha Flight actually broke ranks and chose to operate independently, and there were numerous times when the group served the country on a volunteer basis after the project was shut down.

Canadian officials have been reticent to volunteer any information on the matter until it is resolved, and critics now charge that the government is simply waiting for the opportunity to put a positive spin on the matter.

—Continued in ALPHA FLIGHT #6

# CITY BECOMES PREHISTORIC JUNGLE

**Ben Urich -BUGLE STAFF**

It only lasted one day and one night. In the life of the typical New Yorker, that's but a blink of an eye, as he or she fights what seems to be the rest of the world on the commute in and out of work; fights like a primitive beast in the middle for survival in a world which sometimes seems without rules. Yesterday, that analogy became stunning reality in a horrible way. For one terrible day, New York City, the greatest city on Earth, the pinnacle of modern technology and achievement, was transformed into a prehistoric jungle, complete with man-eating Dinosaurs, vines and trees, and death.

If this report sounds blasé, it is for a good reason. Despite the awesome sights and terrible dangers true-bred New Yorkers have been exposed to since the advent of the modern super hero, it is simply impossible so soon after this latest event to emote the proper feelings and transform them into words. Shock at the initial transformation soon gave way to a numb, almost mindless survival instinct which didn't end until long after the events were over.

The transformation began quickly and without warning at dusk. Massive vines from plants that became extinct hundreds of thousands of years ago quickly snaked through the city, enveloping cars, buildings, filling tunnels, destroying sidewalks, essentially overrunning the city. Within mere minutes, the city was covered in flora. That's when the terror started. Dinosaurs of every type we learned about as schoolchildren quickly swept through the city, grazing on commuters and roosting atop vine-covered skyscrapers. Truly, a Steven Spielberg movie come to life. For the next five hours, panic and terror ensued as the people of New York ran for their lives. Many citizens were saved from the jaws of certain death by Ka-Zar. Formerly a member of British royalty, Kevin Plunder, Ka-Zar, grew up in the Savage Land, a prehistoric jungle which has mysteriously survived evolution amidst, of all places, Antarctica. Though he fought valiantly, there was only so much one man could do.

Help arrived in the form of S.H.I.E.L.D. and its incredible mobile base, the third Helicarrier. After a period of joining the battle to save innocent lives, S.H.I.E.L.D. operatives changed course, removing a giant sophisticated piece of machinery out of Central Park and taking off over the Atlantic Ocean. This is the second time in less than a year that Central Park has been the epicenter of a city-wide disaster, and it is unclear if there was any link between the two events. S.H.I.E.L.D. officials refused comment, but early speculation is that the machine in question was responsible for the city's transformation, and that S.H.I.E.L.D. planned on disposing of it in the Atlantic. Mere moments after the Helicarrier had departed, the city returned to normal.

There are many questions to be answered, particularly for the survivors of loved ones lost in the melee.

—Continued in KA-ZAR #10

# FANTASTIC FOUR RETURNS TO ACTION IN PARIS

**Bill Tatters -BUGLE**

Paris Bureau—It was only a few weeks ago that the Fantastic Four along with many other world-famous heroes seemingly returned from the dead to defend the Earth once again. In that time span, the Avengers have slowly begun to reform, Captain America prevented a massive terrorist strike in Japan, and the Fantastic Four decided upon a well deserved vacation. But that hard-earned respite was interrupted by an unidentified menace here in the heart of France which both the heroes and local authorities have refused to comment on.

The trouble began when a local contractor conducted an excavation underneath what once was a small apartment building, preparing the site for the construction of a massive new corporate skyscraper. Though the construction company has gone on record saying that everything proceeded normally, a worker who requested anonymity said that the excavation team discovered a chamber, not shown on schematics, deep underground. The anonymous worker said that when his co-workers attempted to pierce the wall of the cavern to see what was inside, a noxious gas was released, knocking them unconscious.

It is now believed that the Fantastic Four whose involvement was unknown until the unidentified worker came forward saved the excavation team and prevented the deadly fumes from spreading through Paris and endangering thousands of people. Dr. Reed Richards, the Fantastic Four's nominal leader, declined comment on the matter, and none of the site's other construction workers were available to comment, casting some doubt on the anonymous source's story.

—Continued in FANTASTIC FOUR #1


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# CONAN

## all-new reel marvel

Robert E. Howard's barbarian hero, Conan, has been around a long time. Not quite as long as his adventures — set 12,000 years in the past — would suggest however; Howard created Conan for a series of stories which ran in the pulp magazine Weird Tales from 1932-1936. Those stories, and other later stories, were collected and expanded for release as Conan novels after Howard's suicide in 1936. Other writers contributed to Conan's history as well, leading to over sixty novels by present day.

Marvel Comics' involvement with Conan began in October 1970, with the publication of Conan The Barbarian #1. The series was popular enough to merit several spin-off series, including Savage Sword of Conan, King Conan, Red Sonja, and another Howard hero, King Kull. In 1981, Arnold Schwarzenegger starred in the first Conan The Barbarian feature film, which was successful enough to spawn a sequel, Conan The Destroyer, in 1984. More recently, animation producers Claster/Sunbow wanted a piece of the action, and they produced the syndicated animated Conan The Adventurer in summer 1992-1993, adding a CBS mid-season replacement of Conan and the Barbarian Kids in 1993-1994.

The one medium that Conan has yet to conquer is live-action television, but that realm has been dealt with as of the end of September 1997, with the premiere of the new syndicated action-adventure series, Conan. The sword-swinging series has been booked for 22 syndicated episodes, from Keller Entertainment, with each episode budgeted at about $1 million each.

The Hyborian Age is full of magic, and the land of Cimmeria is ruled by the evil sorcerer Hissah Zul (British actor Jeremy Kemp). Prophecies reveal that Hissah Zul will one day be slain by a descendant of Atlantis, and the magician wants to prevent that. The descendant in question is Conan, a bold and daring barbarian who escaped slavery and has allied himself with a band of thieves and gladiators. Conan's allies include a big, lusty Viking warrior named Vulkar (Andrew Craig), the witty dwarf, Otli (Danny Woodburn), the mute gladiator, Zzeben (Robert McRay), and African-American fighter, Bayu (T.J. Storm). Conan is sometimes aided by the feisty bandit queen Karella (Aly Dunne), who has a love-hate relationship with the muscle-bound hero. In his ongoing battle to bring down Hissah Zul, Conan will have to fight evil mummies, a half-woman, half-spider creature named Spydra, underground Beast-Men, lake monsters, mythical beasts and black magic spells.

The series is shot on location in the hills and jungles of Mexico, which is where actor Ralf Moeller called from during a break in filming, to provide Marvel VISION with an exclusive interview. Moeller is a gigantic man, standing 6'6" tall, and weighing in at 265 lbs. Having started body-building in 1978, he was a former Mr. Universe (1986), and was the first world champion to win that

competition completely drug-free. Moeller was born in Recklinghausen, Germany, and his accent is still audible, though it lends him the same air that Schwarzenegger had in the Conan films. "When I arrived [in the US] I couldn't speak a word of English, but I knew that the career could start with my body," says Moeller. "I was well known in the body-building world as the tallest and biggest body-builder ever."

Moeller's past film credits include roles in Universal Soldier, Best of the Best II, and The Viking Saga, as well as summer 1997's comic book flop, Batman & Robin, as Mr. Freeze's right-hand man. "I came over in 1991. My goal was to be a movie star," he laughs. He recalls being offered roles in both Demolition Man and Street Fighter, but he turned them down. "I didn't want to be the guy who gets beaten up all the time."

A meeting with Mark Canton (who was in charge of Columbia/TriStar at the time) at Arnold Schwarzenegger's Cigar Night at a Los Angeles club led to the possible new role for Moeller. Canton was trying to get the Conan film rights to do a new feature film, and he wanted Moeller to take over the role! When the movie rights weren't available (Keller already had a deal for them), the studio dropped their plans. Moeller went to Keller, did three screen tests for the television role, and landed it. In a turn of events, Keller recently acquired the film rights to Conan as well. They are now trying to get John Milius, the writer of the first Conan film, to write a third film for Moeller to star in.

Moeller had known Arnold Schwarzenegger since 1981, and the more famous actor gave his blessing to Moeller to take over his role. "He thinks it's a great idea. When Columbia was trying to do the deal for a feature film, he was ready to step on as an executive producer." Moeller considers Arnold a friend, but emphasizes that he has not used that friendship to further his career. "You have to do it by yourself," he says. Schwarzenegger recently traveled to the Mexican set of the new Conan series, to shoot publicity pictures with himself giving Conan's Sword of Atlantis to Moeller.

Adept at boxing, diving, and horseback riding, Moeller does many of his own stunts. "I prepared myself like [I would] for the Olympics for this

show, because I knew it would be hard out here." Moeller begins his days at 6:00 am with a workout, is on a hot and humid set from 8:30 am to 8:00 pm, and usually is in bed by 11:00 pm, six days a week. "I have to be in shape. You expect Conan to have muscles. We have all the other characters — Tarzan, Sinbad, Hercules — and they're all nice, cute models, but finally were bringing some beef back to television!"

Finding stuntmen who match Moeller's size has been impossible, meaning the actor has done about 90% of his own stunts. "I have to do it. I have stunt doubles, but... no one has that kind of shape. I'm 265 pounds, very ripped and muscular." Recently, he filmed a scene hanging from a dangling bridge, requiring him to fall and crash against a mountain. Horseback riding is prevalent in most episodes, and, of course, there is the swordplay. Kiyoshi Yamazaki, who trained Schwarzenegger for the first two Conan movies, and Brigette Nielsen for Red Sonja, came back on board as the fight coordinator.

Moeller's Atlantean sword is made of real steel. "It's 32.5 pounds, so it's heavy," the actor laughs, before adding, "but I don't care, with all my muscles. The good thing is that you see some guy like me riding on a horse, all the stunts and the swordfights.. and it's not like he cannot walk because his muscles are so heavy!"

More difficult to deal with than the stunts and swords are the special effects, many of which are computer-generated imagery (CGI) added months after the actors finish filming their work. "Now, I've gotten used to it, but in the beginning, you fight some stuff that is not there." Producer Peter Chesney (Men In Black) shows Moeller designs of the monsters before each episode films, so that he knows what he'll be fighting with when the film is composited with the special effects. "We built some monsters, of course, but the rest is [done with a] computer."

Catching up on Conan's history in Marvel Comics is one of the ways Moeller passes time between scenes. He doesn't claim to have read all of them, but says he's read "some old ones, some new ones. I hope that they all change in the future and give him my face," he jokes. "I don't recognize me right now."

As for the tone of the new Conan, Moeller says "We're doing a family show. I have a seven-year-old daughter, and she has to be able to see the show. We have fights, sorcery and magic, and bad guys, of course, but it is not that I walk through blood. The hardcore [violence] fans will have to wait for the feature film. We have a lot of action, and special effects, but it can be seen by the younger audience. We keep Conan more in a charming way, not like the barbarian who took the woman whenever he wanted. He's more the gentleman Conan."

Besides his co-stars, for whom he has high praise, Moeller is pleased with the guest stars who have been brought in for various episodes. As an example, he notes former Flash Gordon star Sam Jones in the seventh episode, and former Incredible Hulk star Lou Ferrigno in episode eight. "It's nice to have all these former action people who are still very well known. They all play the bad guys."

At the time of this interview, Conan has yet to debut. Moeller is looking forward to not only the debut, but also to a trip to New York on September 21st-22nd. There, he'll sign at Forbidden Planet, appear on the Howard Stern Show and Rosie O'Donnell Show, and attend a big celebration at the Trump Building, for which he is planned to enter riding a horse.

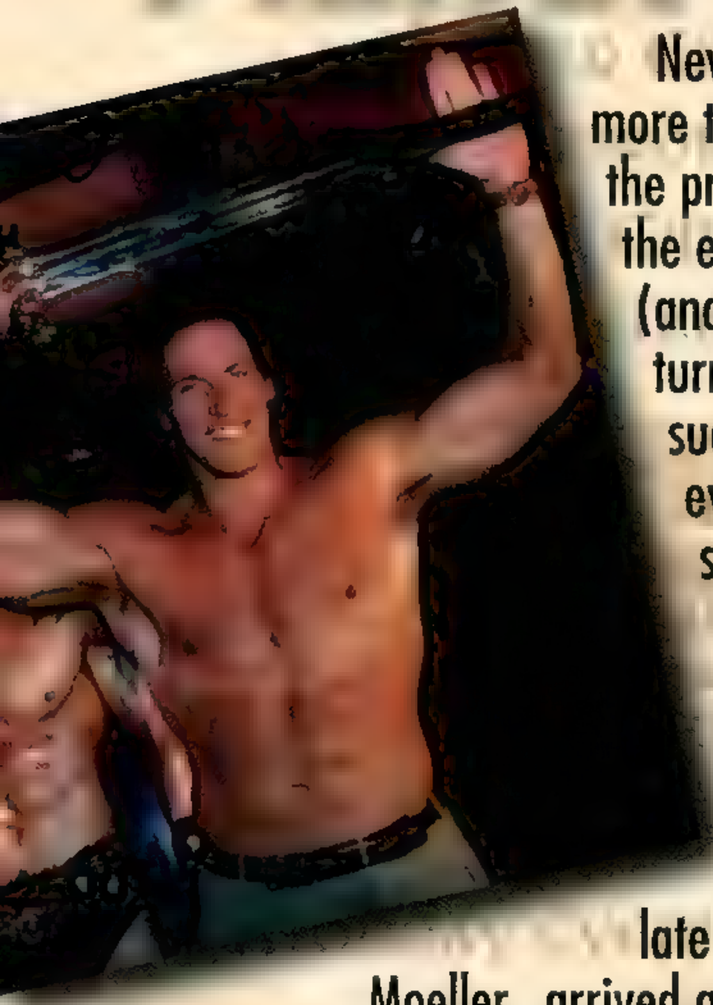
Meanwhile, Moeller has high hopes for the series. "This television series will give me the opportunity to be discovered more for my acting, and to get well known worldwide. I hope it will be a success, and that we are able to continue this kind of character. Even before Arnold started, Conan had a lot of fans." Ralf Moeller is determined that his Conan won't disappoint those fans.

**CONAN EPISODES AT PRESS TIME!**

- **#1-2 — Heart of the Elephant** (2 hrs) week of Sept. 22nd
- **#3 — Lair of the Beast-Men** week of Sept. 29th
- **#4 — Heir Apparent** week of Oct. 6th
- **#5 — The Siege of Ahl Sohn-Bar** week of Oct. 13th

**Coming Next Month in Marvel Vision:**
A closer look at The Incredible Hulk's second animated season with a preview episode guide, plus news about the live-action Hulk movie!

# Conan Invades Planet Hollywood!



New York's famed Planet Hollywood eatery served up more than the usual fare on September 27 when they hosted the premiere of the television series "Conan!" Invitations to the exclusive event were hand-delivered by a very buff (and very shirtless) Conan look-alike, causing heads to turn even here at the mighty Marvel offices, where sights such as a sweating guy in a Spider-Man costume are everyday fare! The gift-bearing barbarian left several scrolls — one each for CONAN editors Joe Andreani and Tim Tuohy, and one for president Joe Calamari--requesting their presence at the debut bash (guess word about their table manners must've gotten out)!

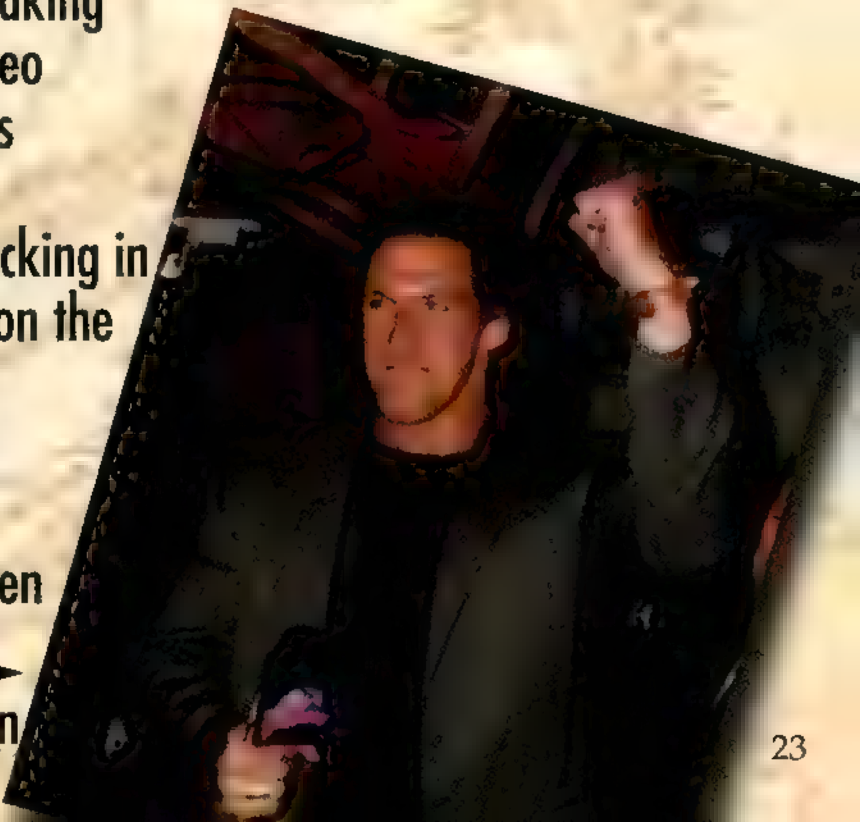
The Planet was teeming with excited partygoers by the time the men of Marvel made their fashionably late entrances. The guest of honor, "Conan" star Ralf Moeller, arrived at nine o'clock. "He was a huge guy, about six foot eight and two hundred and ninety pounds," reported Joe Andreani in slightly awed tones. "I think he was a Mr. Universe. He's from Austria, like Arnold Schwarzenegger!"

The former Conan Arnie was supposed to be on hand to present the original barbarian's sword to Planet Hollywood's manager, but was unable to attend as his wife was at birth's door, to put it delicately, over two thousand miles away in California, so Ralf gallantly presented the restaurant with the movie sword instead. Afterwards, TV's biggest barbarian posed good-naturedly for photos of two varieties: fully clothed, and shirtless. Crews from E! television bustled around him, but strangely neglected to capture Tim Tuohy in all his animal glory. Just wait till the series needs an ape — they'll come begging then!

Meanwhile, guests who weren't busily taking pictures or glued to the lenses of their Hi-8 video cameras frolicked among the cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, the most fitting of which were the barbarically large and juicy barbecued ribs, clocking in at easily six times the size of any other snack on the table. "No one touched them," said Joe knowingly. "There was just no way to eat them neatly."

Hey, isn't gesturing wildly with half-eaten ribs what they're paying this Ralf guy for? →

—Polly Watson



STARRING

# RALPH MACCHIO

BY LYSA M. HAWKINS

**1975: 24-year-old Ralph Macchio attends his first comic book convention. There he asks Don McGregor, writer of Black Panther and Killraven fame, for his autograph. Don immediately recognizes Ralph's name. Apparently, he had sent a number of fan mail letters, comments and insights to Marvel's editors over the years. With Ralph in tow, Don began introducing him to the wacky inside world of comics, specifically Marvel. From fan boy, he made the leap to writing interviews for Marvel's FOOM Magazine. A short year later, Ralph was offered a position as an assistant editor. Now, over twenty years later, Ralph's still there. Amazing what a little perseverance can bring!**

(LMH) Over the years what project, writing or editing, has been your most favorable experience?
**(RM) One of the things I was most happy to be a part of was a fantasy series we did in 1979 called WEIRD WORLD. It was written by Doug Moench and illustrated by John Buscema, with painting by Peter Ledger and inking by Rudy Nebres. It was interesting because at the time, it was so different from anything anyone else was doing. I thought it was rather far ahead of its time with the techniques we were using, such as watercolor and the reproduction value. All of that stuff I thought was fantastic. So if I were to look back on something I'd like to show people it would be WEIRD WORLD.**

(LMH) Would you ever consider doing WEIRD WORLD again?
**(RM) Yes. In fact, Mark Bernardo was talking to Doug Moench about bringing it back. It was a fully realized Tolkienesque fantasy world, and so there are still many stories left to tell about WEIRD WORLD. I'm expecting something good to come of it over the next year.**

(LMH) You're known for your film and television adaptations, such as Dune, Independence Day and the X-Men animated show. How do you go about writing them? Are you given a script or a premise to write from?
**(RM) Yes. Usually, whether it is a movie adaptation or the X-Men TV show, I am given a script which I read a number of times until I assimilate the story. I take notes on it, then I sit down and break it into a plot that will fit a 22-page comic book. No matter how action packed a film is, much of a film is talking. So you have to find a way to include all the necessary information, but still give the reader an awful lot of action.**

(LMH) Outside of comics, what writers do you enjoy reading, or feel influenced by?
**(RM) I would have to say the closest that anyone has written that would work and in fact has worked beautifully as a comic was Robert E. Howard's stuff. His work is so powerful, so provocative. He draws the pictures for you. He's another one who created a complete secondary world. I just loved the CONAN books, both as prose and later as comics by Barry Windsor-Smith and Roy Thomas.**

(LMH) What ingredients does it take to make a good editor?
**(RM) A good editor has got to understand people in general and writers and artists specifically. Understand what it is that motivates people to want to create. You, as an editor, have to create an atmosphere in which the people who are working for you want to produce their best work. That means you can't be overbearing or dictatorial, but at the same time you can't be too lax. You're supposed to be the director of the book. It's not an editor's job to insert his vision so much as to try to get the creators of the books to open up and give their best.**

(LMH) What comic book would you say has made a positive change in the industry?
**(RM) I would have to say Frank Miller's work on DAREDEVIL began a whole trend in comics. I think a whole lot of people tried to pick up on what Frank was doing, but didn't do it quite as well. Frank's stuff brought back a Will Eisner detective feel. Also, Jim Starlin's DEATH OF CAPTAIN MARVEL, which was for Marvel the first of its kind. That, I would have to say, was influential to the media.**

(LMH) What changes do you feel are needed to ensure that comics remain vital and successful in the future?
**(RM) Right now we're not bringing the younger people in to read the books. It's nice that people like myself who started reading Marvel comics when they were ten years old have continued reading them into their forties; however, that's still a shrinking audience. We need to have the next generation want to pick up the books. They have to be accessible, but they can't lose that indefinable thing about Marvel that makes it something that a child would want to read and feel that he's reading something different than anything else he might get as a child. So it goes beyond whether or not a kid is going to get the same entertainment value from a video game or whatever. Marvel somehow has to provide them with the feeling that by getting a Marvel comic, they're entering a world that is unique and it gives them a source of entertainment they can't get anywhere else.**

(LMH) You are known, along with Mark Gruenwald, as one of Marvel's greatest pranksters. What ranks among your greatest pranks?
**(RM) Nothing you could put in print!**

# 30 Minutes With... Tom DeFalco

I must admit when Tim gave me this interview with Tom DeFalco, I was a little bit apprehensive. I mean, this guy oversaw Marvel's vast talent pool as Editor-in-Chief for over seven years! He has been a driving force in the "House of Ideas" for almost two decades. Many comic fans love to go to their shops and play "armchair editor" as they gladly tell how they'd run a company or how they can change the industry. Most of the time their points are based on wild rumors from the Internet or what a friend heard somewhere. Some of these rumors are true in some form, while others are simply the folly of "fanboy philosophers". Either way, I'm sure Tom DeFalco's name came up in many of those conversations. Upon talking with him, I realized he was a pretty easy-going guy. I found that he had a lot to say and quite a bit (for numerous reasons) that he couldn't.

**DD:** Tom, many fans see you as someone synonymous with Marvel for as long as they can remember. What they probably didn't know was that you started your career elsewhere. Can you tell us a bit about that?
**TD:** It was 1972; I was just out of college. I'd always been interested in comics and I went about getting an interview in one of the worst possible ways. I sent out resumes to a bunch of different publishers with samples of a weekly comic strip I had worked on. Fortunately, Archie Comics bit. I worked with Archie Comics for a number of years, both on staff and freelance. I also freelanced for Charlton and DC. At any given point I think I was free-lancing for three companies at the same time.

In the early part of my career I was mainly a humor writer. I worked on all of the characters in Archie's world. I also wrote WHEELIE AND THE CHOPPER BUNCH with Joe Staton and books like SCOOBY-DOO. In one way, shape, or form, I wrote every incarnation of the printed Flintstones except for the Star Comics version and whatever new stuff they're doing today. I think the first thing I did for DC was a romance story. I'd write any type of story that someone would commission because I loved the work.

**DD:** Eventually you did do some freelance at Marvel towards the late '70s if I'm not mistaken?
**TD:** That's correct. I started as a freelancer...I believe my first assignment was a six page Vision story. Back then, the new guys would have to do tryout stories to show that they could actually handle the characters in the proper way. My story was called "Double Vision." Many years later I discovered, to my utter horror, "Double Vision" was being used as the script they were giving to all new potential artists as their tryout story. They did it because they felt it was a difficult story to draw. It was true. There was quite a bit happening in the story. That's because I had always did a storyboard or full script and had been trained to get as much as I could into a short story. For the first few years of my career, all I did was five and six page stories. You had to get a lot of information into a story that size.

After doing some short stories at Marvel, I was assigned two issues of the AVENGERS, and that scared the heck out of me.

**DD:** How did it scare you? Most writers would see it as a dream assignment.
**TD:** Up until then, I was writing short stories, not whole issues. Also, I mean...to do the Avengers...it was...very intimidating. I don't recall the issue numbers, but we introduced the character called Bloodhawk. Over time, Marvel offered me a long term contract. I believe my first regular monthly title was MACHINE MAN.

**DD:** Your work as a writer, and later an editor, has touched 99.9% of the characters at Marvel. Do you have an interesting anecdote about the creation of any of these characters?
**TD:** I had been given the assignment to help develop and write the origin for Dazzler. That project was

an "on again, off again" type of thing. The first issue came out about two or three years after I had actually completed the script.

**DD:** Why so late? Wasn't she originally conceived as part of the X-Men?
**TD:** No, she was originally developed as a concept. The upper offices were intending for her to be associated with a real life singer.

**DD:** Like someone who was on the charts at the time or were they starting from scratch like how the Monkees were developed?
**TD:** Like the Monkees...They wanted to create this persona of Dazzler in the real world and have this newly discovered singer who would fit the role. At one point it was in development as a movie. It kept bouncing back and forth in all these different forms until it was finally marketed as a comic book.

**DD:** So do you think there's a pair of roller skates with those little disco mirrors glued onto them hidden away in someone's closet ?
**TD:** (laughter)...I don't know, maybe.

**DD:** When did you make the transfer over to the editor's chair?
**TD:** That was around 1980. Jim Shooter was the Editor-in-Chief at the time and he needed more staff. He came to me and asked if I could help him out for about six months. I was hesitant because I hadn't had a full time job for a number of years. When I was on staff at Archie, I had to be in the office only two or three days a week. But, after I thought about it, I realized Jim had always treated me well and I thought, "You should always take care of the ones who take care of you."
So I came onboard for what I thought would be six months. I have a very terrible sense of time (laughter) and didn't pay too much attention. Before I knew it, it was a lot longer than six months.

**DD:** After you accepted the position, what titles did you inherit?
**TD:** I had all the Spider-Man titles, GHOST RIDER, THE MICRONAUTS, and WHAT IF?. My first assistant was Mark Gruenwald and WHAT IF? kind of came over with him as part of the package.

**DD:** As an editor did you have the creative teams follow a set format, be it Marvel style or full script?
**TD:** No...I always felt that people should work in whatever way they're the most comfortable. Certain writers work best with a full script. Some artists prefer a full script. I feel the talent should work out how they can best complete the job.
I believe that you get the best results by working Marvel style. Speaking as a writer, full script is easier, faster, and a lot less aggravating.
I don't recall Marvel ever having a formal set of rules on how to do a story. Of course, we always used the general rule: you introduce your characters, you introduce your conflict, and you have your characters resolve the conflict, end of story. Those things are more of a definition of a story, rather than formal rules on how to write a story.
I have heard writers talk about a very specific formula they follow...that such and such happens between pages one and four, then such and such happens between pages five and ten, and so on.

**DD:** Did you ever write like that?
**TD:** Absolutely not. I noticed that the writers who did write like that eventually stopped working for Marvel. Usually not by their choice. Now, if you're asking me if I block out the whole story before I sit down to type it? Yes, I do. I work on it in my head and hammer out the structure. I make sure that every scene is linked into my theme. I usually accomplish this by writing down notes, staring at the ceiling, walking around in circles, and doing laundry (laughter). After that's done, I have a silent movie in my head with a beginning, middle, and end. Then I sit down and start to type.

**DD:** After spending some time as an editor you received a promotion. Somehow, that promotion got you the job as writer on a book you used to edit, AMAZING SPIDER-MAN. What was that all about?
**TD:** Marvel gave me a promotion to Executive Editor. The extra duties meant that I'd have to give up editing the Spider-Man titles, which I did kicking and screaming. Danny Fingeroth was made editor of those books. One day Danny came into my office with some news. Roger Stern and John Romita, Jr., who were working on AMAZING SPIDER-MAN at that time, had decided to leave the book. Danny slated Ron Frenz to take over the art, but needed a writer. I got out my list of writers to give him a few suggestions when I noticed he had a big smile on his face. Danny said, "I

actually have someone in mind. I want you to write it." I told him he was out of his mind, but he continued to defend his choice. "You're familiar with the character," he said, "so why don't you take a shot?" He eventually convinced me to take the title. I owe my whole Spider-Man writing career to Danny Fingeroth, and I'll never forgive him for it...(laughter). Danny was also the first person to team me up with Ron.

**DD:** Speaking of Ron Frenz, you two have had quite a collaborative history together. Thor, just to mention one. You also recently did the HERCULES Limited Series. Do you guys prefer Marvel style or full script?
**TD:** Over the years Ron and I have developed our own version of Marvel style. Basically, we get on the phone and throw ideas back and forth at each other. Through the course of our conversation a story starts to emerge as a rough outline. Sometimes he'll call me up and say, "You know, I'm looking at this scene and it's really stupid! (laughter) We have to do something better." So we rework it until we're satisfied with the results. At this stage of the game, my favorite guy to work with is Ron Frenz.

**DD:** Okay, what can you tell us about your stint as Editor-in-Chief?
**TD:** Well, at one point I was brought into a meeting with the President of the company and he said that I was Editor-in-Chief. Of course it wasn't that simple, but that's all I'd really like to say on that subject. I don't feel it's appropriate to get into the politics that were involved at the beginning or end of my tenure. I can say many interesting things happened in those seven and a half years. Most of them good...a few of them not so good. Overall, I enjoyed the experience.

DD: That's cool...I can respect that. Let's move on to something else. Do you have a favorite character and is it the same one that you would always love to write?
TD: The character I love working on is Spider-Man. There was a time I never thought I'd say that again. I love Peter Parker and the whole Spider-Man mythos. Now, having said that...the character who I regard as my favorite is undoubtedly Captain America. He's made a few appearances in comics I've written.

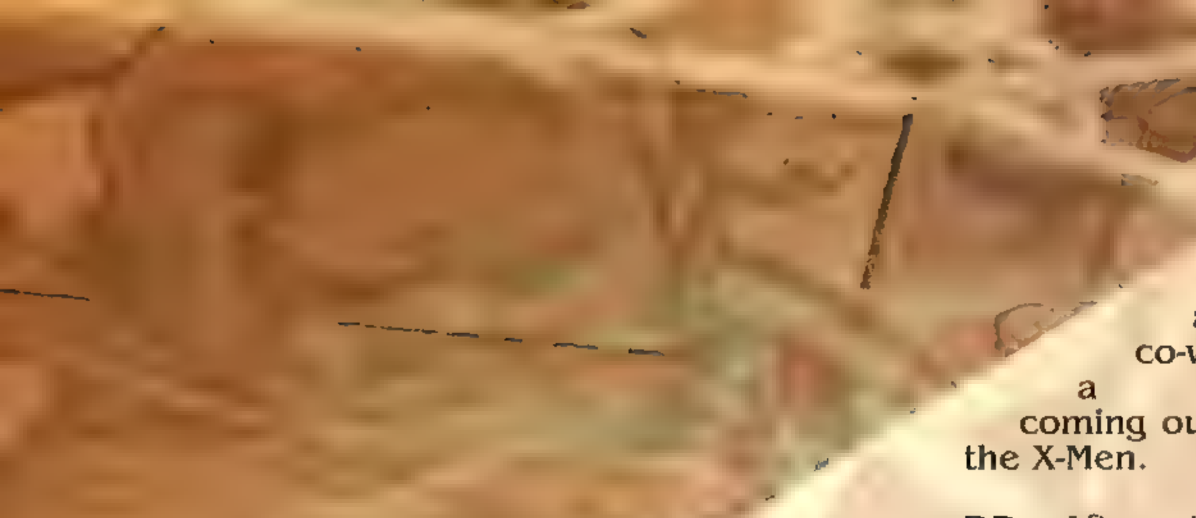
DD: Having worked in comics for so long, are you currently doing something outside of the industry?
**TD:** Well, technically it's still related to comic books, but I'm writing some prose short stories that are centered around Marvel characters. I also co-wrote three novels which I believe are coming out in '98 featuring Spider-Man and the X-Men.

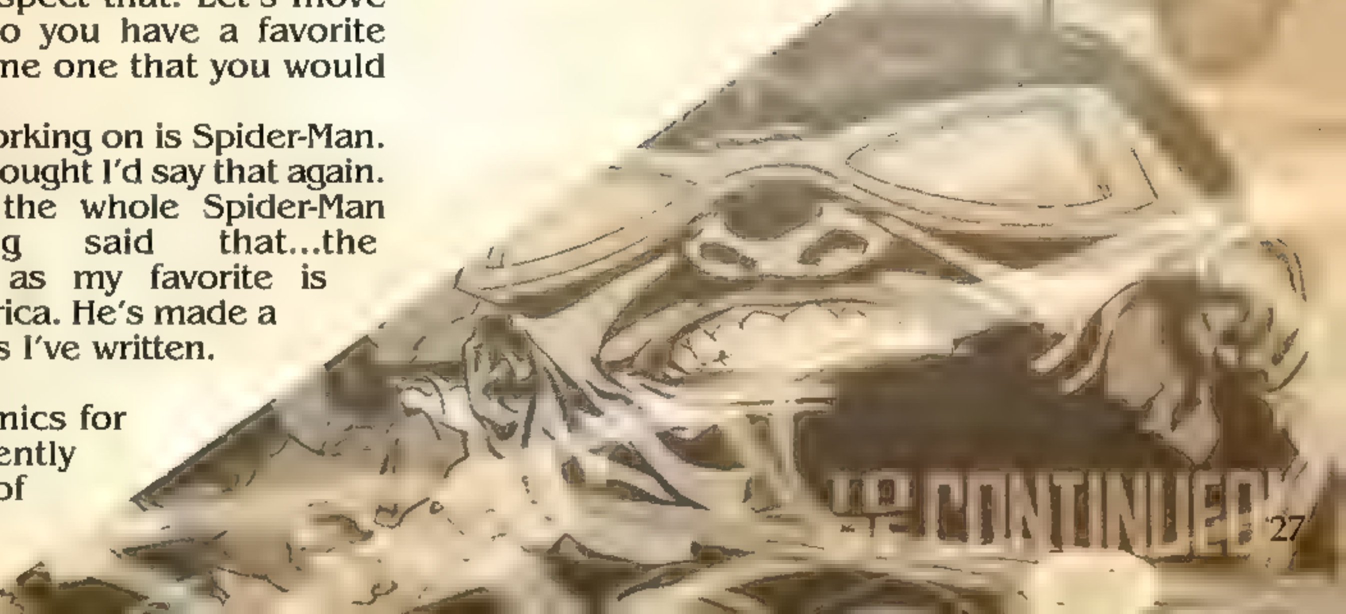
**DD:** After starting out as a freelancer and eventually making it to the top editorial position, what advice do you have for new talent?
**TD:** The main piece of advice is don't send anything to the Editor-in-Chief. I always wanted to answer all my phone calls and mail, but it was impossible. I eventually got to the point that I would only return phone calls up until eight o'clock at night. Once it hit eight, I was going home! And, if I didn't know you, you were on the bottom of the list. If I didn't get all the calls done with people I knew, they would start off the next day's list while the unknowns got dropped.
In terms of mail...during the last few years, I never even saw my mail. I was getting close to 200-300 pieces of mail a day. I couldn't even look at submissions. If I attempted to open my mail, that would be the whole day. I had two people whose whole function was to look at my mail. Out of all those letters, only ten or twenty things would filter their way to my desk.
For the writers...You want to write a story proposal about a character that's being published and send it to that editor. You have little chance of selling a story about a new character or one that isn't being published.
As for artists...your responsibility is to use pictures to tell a story. So send two or three pages (copies, not originals) that tell a small story. Artists have it a little easier because they can use almost any character and send it to any comic company. Their talent is viewed on the page, whereas a writer must convince an editor to buy a specific story.

**DD:** Tom, I want to thank you for this chat.
**TD:** I really had a good time and thanks for being there!
Tim: Whata guy, that Tom!

Tom is currently writing AMAZING SPIDER-MAN. Also, be sure to check out the HERCULES Limited Series he did in collaboration with Ron Frenz and Pat Olliffe.

**—Dean Davis**





# Time Slip
# Captain Britain

Welcome to the Marvel Universe that would have been if today's hottest creators had been around at the birth of Marvel Comics. Think of this as the world that might have been. Think of it as the world that might still be coming.

Matt Smith, whose artwork and fine eye for design has made him one of the unique rising stars in the comics world—having worked on titles like Walk Through October, Starman, Green Lantern & Doctor Fate, Night Force and Johnny Chaos, brings his amazing abilities to Marvel's first international hero—Captain Britain.

Everyone knows of the fateful night in which Brian Braddock fled for his life from Joshua Stragg— a night when he ran straight into the waiting grasp of destiny. For on that night, Braddock came upon the Siege Perilous. There, two beings from a mythic realm called "Otherworld" gave him a choice between two mystical objects that would allow him to save his world. He could choose the magical amulet of life... or the sword of death. He chose the amulet and was transformed into Captain Britain, only to later become the leader of the international mutant group known as Excalibur.

But in the world of Time Slip... the world where Matt Smith designs Captain Britain... Brian realizes that he cannot choose life without also accepting death as a part of it. He sees through the Otherworldly beings' offer and chooses both the amulet and the sword.

Once again, he is transformed into Captain Britain—but he is a far different man— with a far greater destiny. For the mixed bloods of Lions and Dragons now course through his body. He is complete. No longer prone to fears of failure or bouts of uncontrollable anger, he is literally a perfect man— a knight for whom chivalry is not lost. He can weep with the weakest of hearts. And not falter at the sight of bloodied stumps or gouged headless corpses. All of England toasts his coming.

Though villains like Morgane LeFay, the Sentinels, Arcade and Mad Jim Jaspers assail him, he never fails. For nothing that he now has can be taken from him. Even if death were to court him, it no longer has any power over what he has become.

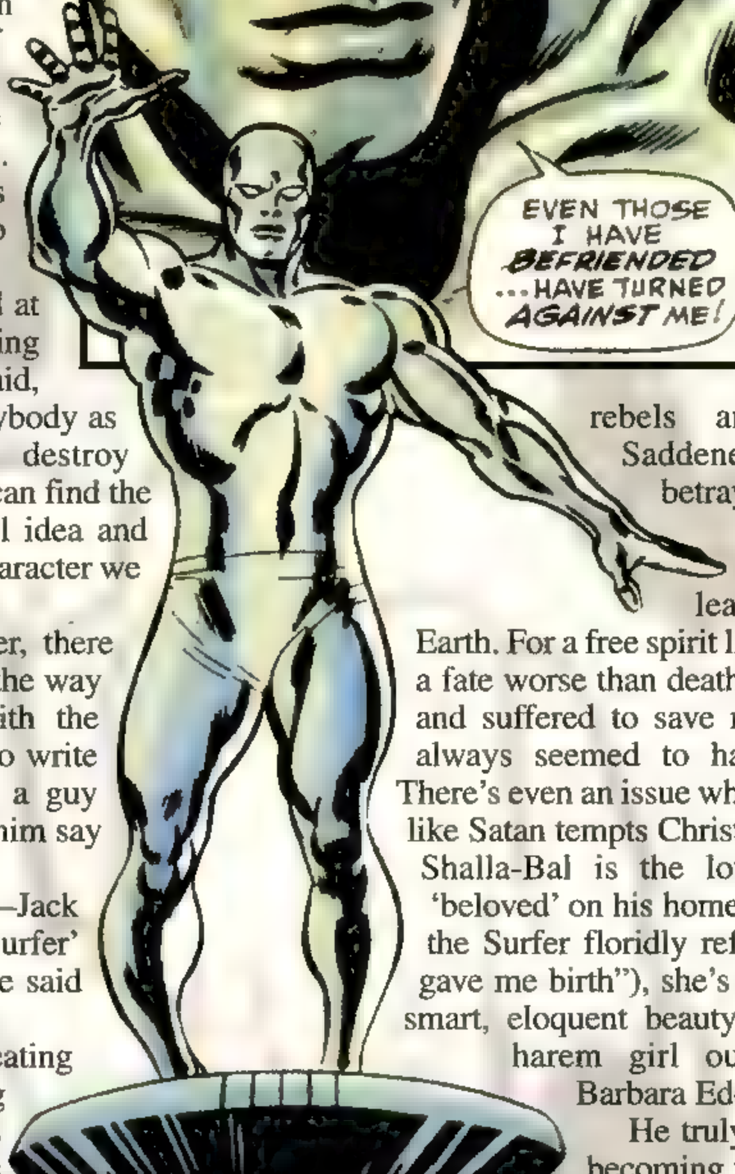
Many believe he is Arthur come back to life—the once and future king.

## SURFING WITH THE ALIEN...

# ORIGIN OF THE SPECIES: SILVER SURFER!

As the herald of Galactus, The Silver Surfer was one half of the co-dependent relationship of the millennium! He was first seen in the pages of THE FANTASTIC FOUR, as an emotionless, inhuman-looking alien on a flying surfboard who had come to Earth so his boss, Galactus, could eat it!

He is Galactus' obedient slave, even calling him 'Master'. The Surfer was unmoved by the fear his presence causes among Earthlings, or the fact that he'd be helping to bring about the end of their world.



He ignored all four members of the FF and The Watcher; the only one he would answer to was Galactus. When told that his actions were destroying our planet, the Surfer responded, "Destroy is merely a word! We simply change things...We change elements into energy...The energy which sustains Galactus, for it is only he who matters!"

When he first appeared in FANTASTIC FOUR #48, as part of the now classic three-part "Galactus Trilogy," he was as much a surprise to Stan Lee as he was to the readers. When Stan explained the Galactus plot to artist Jack Kirby, he had no role for the silver alien.

"Jack drew it and when I looked at the artwork, I saw some nut on a flying surfboard," Stan Lee laughs. "I said, 'Who's this?' Jack said, 'I figure anybody as powerful as Galactus, who can destroy planets, ought to have a herald who can find the planets for him. It was a wonderful idea and Jack intended him as a throwaway character we wouldn't hear from again.

"When I looked at the character, there was something so noble about him, the way Jack drew him, I fell in love with the character," Stan states. "I decided to write him in a psychological vein—he's a guy who comments about life and I had him say a lot of things I was thinking about.

"I don't know who named him—Jack may have said 'Let's call him 'The Surfer' and I like alliteration, so I may have said 'Let's call him 'The Silver Surfer.'"

The Surfer first met his planet-eating benefactor when Galactus was going to devour Zenn-La, the Surfer's home. Back then, The Surfer was known simply as Norrin Radd, an ordinary alien. Radd was unhappy with life before Galactus arrived. "My people have lost the spirit of high adventure," he thinks sadly. "Even the use of our once-proud limbs affords us no pleasure...In this age of conveyor belt streets!"

To save his planet (and all those nifty conveyor belt streets!), Radd offers to become Galactus' herald. Galactus accepts and remolds him into the Surfer. "Your body has been encased in a life-preserving silvery substance of my own creation," the giant explains. "A substance which will shield you from heat...from cold...and from lack of oxygen!" He also gives him a flying silver surfboard that will obey his every whim.

The herald, now brimming with cosmic power, sought unpopulated planets for him to digest. Galactus grew impatient so he erased the Surfer's humanity, to keep his moral compunctions from preventing his next meal.

On Earth, the Surfer's humanity reawakens, so he rebels and attacks Galactus. Saddened by his herald's betrayal, Galactus does not kill him but strips his space-soaring abilities, leaving him trapped on Earth. For a free spirit like Norrin Radd, this was a fate worse than death. Because he's innocent and suffered to save mankind, the Surfer has always seemed to have Christlike qualities. There's even an issue where Mephisto tempts him like Satan tempts Christ in the desert.

Shalla-Bal is the love of his life. As his 'beloved' on his homeworld of Zenn-La (or, as the Surfer floridly refers to it, "The land that gave me birth"), she's the perfect girlfriend—a smart, eloquent beauty who runs around in a harem girl outfit that would make Barbara Eden blush!

He truly loved Shalla-Bal. After becoming the Surfer, she's the only

one he says goodbye to. He admits to himself, "Ever in my heart will there be a longing—for the lovely Shalla-Bal!" Shalla tells him, "If leave you must...then let us depart together! Take me with you, Norrin Radd, for without you there is nothing!" Sadly, the Surfer must leave and they become the longest long-distance relationship in comics.

They make failed efforts to reunite with each other; she's the reason the Surfer was trying to escape Earth and return home. Shalla herself even makes a deal with slimy Zenn-La scientist Yarro Gort—if he gets her to Earth to see if the Surfer is alive or dead, she will become Gort's bride. The marriage was thwarted and Shalla went on to become Zenn-La's Empress.

For a cosmic outcast, the Surfer sure has a great love life. Besides the gorgeous Shalla-Bal, he's romanced some of Marvel's most beautiful babes, including Frankie Raye, Johnny Storm's old girlfriend; Mantis, 'the celestial madonna' and he had a platonic relationship with Alicia Masters, the Thing's girlfriend. (It's even hinted in the Galactus Trilogy that he's attracted to her—running his silver fingers across her face, he uses the all-time great come-on line: "At last I know...Beauty!")

When Ben Grimm sees them together, he punches the Surfer through the roof of the house. As an alien, he is unfamiliar with Ben's feelings of jealousy. Hurling through the air from the force of Ben's fist, he calmly thinks, "My former friend is displeased! He has resorted to the expedient that all Earthlings fall back upon...Savage, unthinking brute force!"

The relationship with Frankie Raye was interesting. She was an Earthwoman who also had the same 'human torch' abilities Johnny did. When Galactus returned to Earth, she cut the same deal Norrin Radd had and became his herald, Nova (no relation to the member of the New Warriors). She and the Surfer fell in love, but she died at the hands of Galactus' renegade herald, Morg.

After his original FF appearances, he was too popular to remain out of sight for long. He made a couple more guest appearences in FANTASTIC FOUR, and finally resurfaced in his own book. Beautifully written by Stan Lee (with great art by John Buscema), the Surfer made an unusual lead character. He looks for the good side of the human spirit and instead finds himself frequently hunted and/or betrayed.

Despite being an innocent, the Surfer has racked up an impressive number of enemies, including Mephisto, lord of the Netherworld, Dr. Doom (who briefly stole his cosmic power), the Doomsday Man, several of Galactus' heralds and Quasimodo, the living computer.

Unlike most comic book heroes, the Surfer never looked for fights. He only turned to violence as a last resort. He would kill only to protect someone. To have a comic-book character who preached pacifism was unheard of. The book was great, brimming with ideas, theories and a real philosophy. Sadly, Marvel's then-publisher urged Stan Lee to drop the Surfer's philosophical outlook and make it a regular slugfest-of-the-month comic. Rather than destroy this brilliant series, Stan cancelled the book.

In 1987, the Surfer returned in his book of the same name. The first issue was a doozy—he escapes Earth and soars the spaceways once again. Of course, this Surfer seems less introspective and more testier than in the first series, more eager to fight. In his appearances in THOR, HULK, and other books, this version of the Surfer looks for trouble.

WIZARD Magazine recently elected Surfer as the most powerful man in comics, plausibly showing how he can beat Superman (a fellow alien), Spawn and others. The Surfer has also traded blows with Marvel's toughest titans, including Hulk, Thing and Thor.

In a straight fight, he knocked out the Hulk, who escaped before the Surfer could use his cosmic power to cure Bruce Banner of his gamma ray-alter ego. He even duked it out with The Vision and Scarlet Witch on the lip of an active volcano.

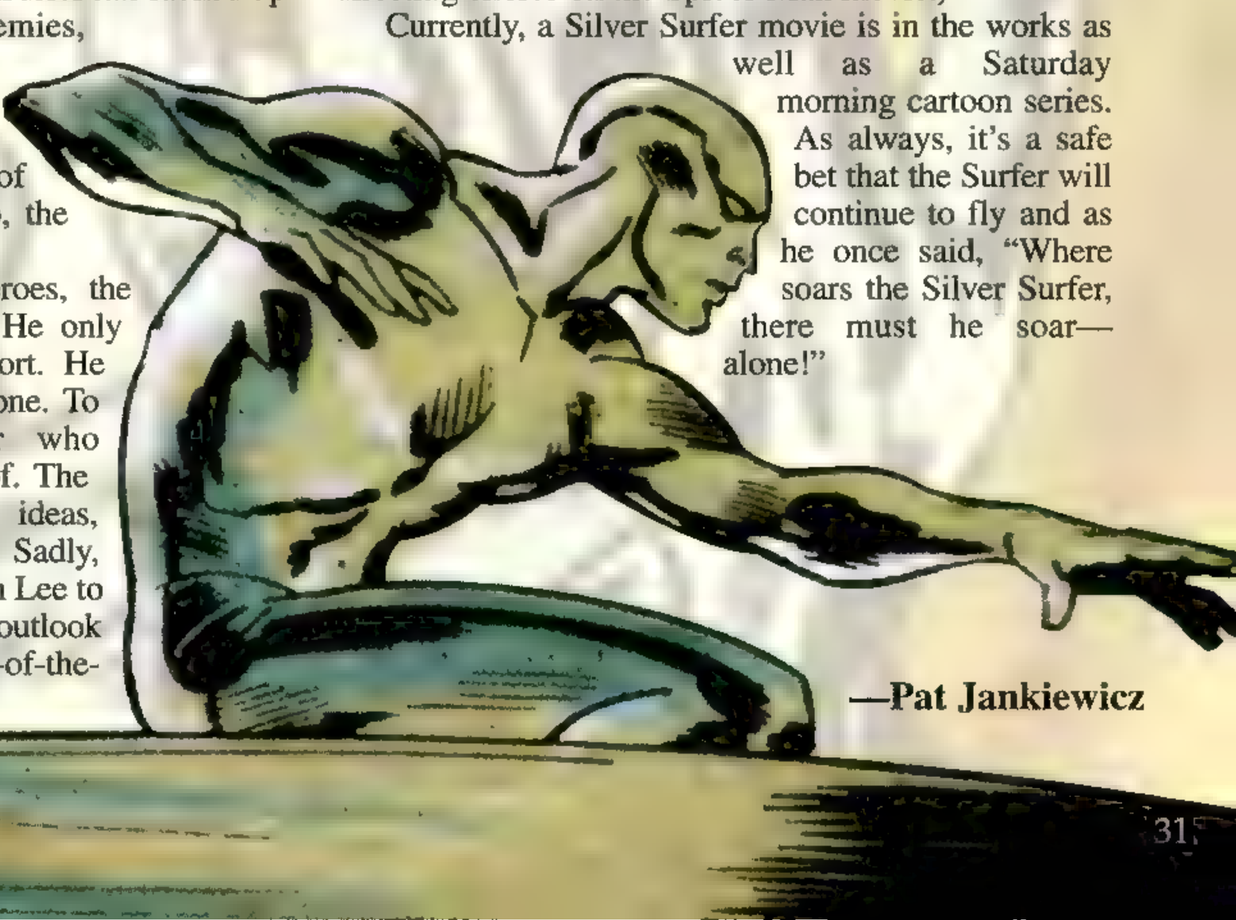
Stan admits that, of all Marvel's characters, his two favorites are Spider-Man and the Silver Surfer. "He's like Everyman." Like Spidey, part of the Surfer's popularity may come from the fact that his face is blank; with basic features and blank eyes, everyone can relate to him.

While Norrin Radd feels underappreciated in the comics, he's beloved in real life. Musician Joe Satriani used him on the cover of an album, MCA of The Beastie Boys has the Surfer tattooed on his elbow, and in the film *Breathless*, Richard Gere plays a small-time hood who admires and quotes the Surfer. (The film's credits are even done in the style of classic Marvel/Surfer letterer Sam Rosen.)

Quentin Tarantino introduced a subplot into *Crimson Tide* where two sailors fight over who drew the Surfer better—Kirby or Moebius. (Denzel Washington breaks up the fight and proves to be the film's hero by declaring Kirby the best.) A Silver Surfer poster also hangs in Tim Roth's apartment in another Tarantino film, *Reservoir Dogs*.

Zenn-La's race of futuristically garbed bald men in a confining culture seems to have inspired elements of George Lucas' *THX-1138*, and it's also no accident that the shape-shifting robot T-1000 in *Terminator 2* resembles the Silver Surfer. T2's writer/director, James Cameron, once said his original goal in life was to work for Marvel Comics. (He's also slated to do writing and directing chores on the Spider-Man movie.)

Currently, a Silver Surfer movie is in the works as well as a Saturday morning cartoon series. As always, it's a safe bet that the Surfer will continue to fly and as he once said, "Where soars the Silver Surfer, there must he soar—alone!"



**—Pat Jankiewicz**

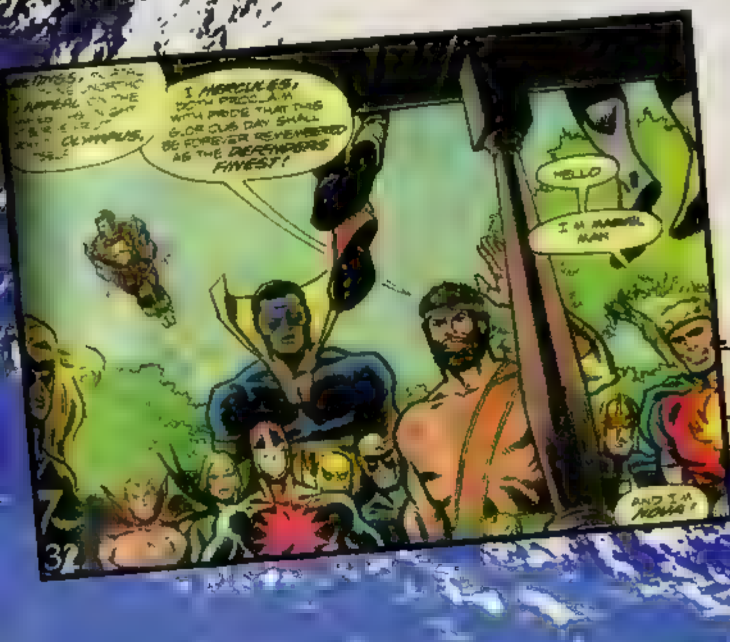
It began with a frustrated filmmaker named "Dollar Bill," who had wormed his way into the lives of the super group known as the Defenders, and was determined to immortalize them in a TV documentary. (Hulk's reaction to the TV special: "Bah!") Bill ended his super-heroic version of "The Real World" by inviting any super-powered beings in the New York area to join the team. As Bill pointed out, because of the non-team status of the Defenders, "anyone with super-powers who wants to declare himself a Defender is automatically a MEMBER!"

# MARVEL VISION SILLIEST MOMENTS

## "MEMBERSHIP MADNESS!"

Bill's special TV offer worked all too well; every solo super hero in New York showed up at the Defenders' riding academy/headquarters desiring membership! Included in this motley crew were such '70s superstars as Ms. Marvel, Captain Marvel, Marvel Man (maybe those three should have formed their own group called the Marvelites!), Nova, Black Goliath, and the Son of Satan! Hercules proclaimed "this glorious day...as the DEFENDERS' FINEST!"

Herc couldn't have been further from the truth! The leader of the Defenders, the hot-headed Nighthawk, blew his fuse at this unwanted super hero invasion, and picked a fight with the Falcon. Nova, the Prowler, and the White Tiger saw some horses and decided to play cowboy. The new recruits decided to elect a non-team leader, and they chose Hercules, who proudly accepted the non-job.

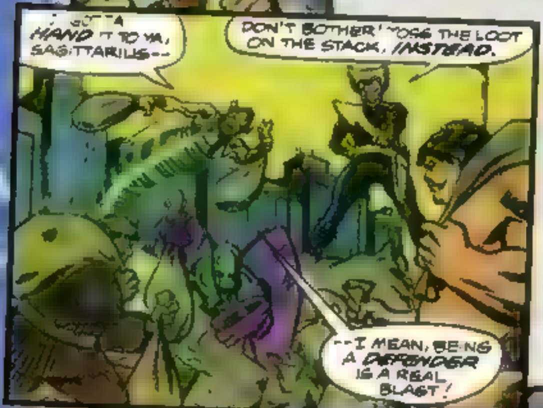



Hulk and Valkyrie served their new teammates the results of Val's first

attempt at brewing coffee. When Paladin complained about not having any cream or sugar, Hulk ordered, "Drink it BLACK!" Most of the guests wound up pouring the awful coffee out on the ground! Stingray commented, "UGH! This is DEVIL'S BREW! Er...NO OFFENSE meant to you, Son of Satan!" Captain Marvel agreed, "Not even THANOS could down this BITTER beverage!"

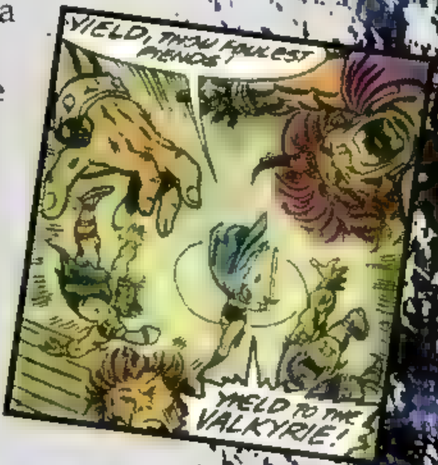
The Jack of Hearts and Capt. Ultra got into a big fight over the flirtatious Hellcat, with the two men resorting to name-calling. Jack referred to Cap as "Captain Color Blind!", and the Ultra Man retaliated with "Jerk of Hearts!"

A bunch of the "new" members decided that even though the Hulk was a fellow teammate, he was still a menace to society and should be apprehended. A big brawl erupted between old Defenders and new, but abruptly came to a halt with the arrival of Iron Man. Shell-Head informed everyone that a gang of super-villains calling themselves "Defenders" had gone on a crime spree throughout Manhattan. At this point, Hulk decided he'd had enough and took off.



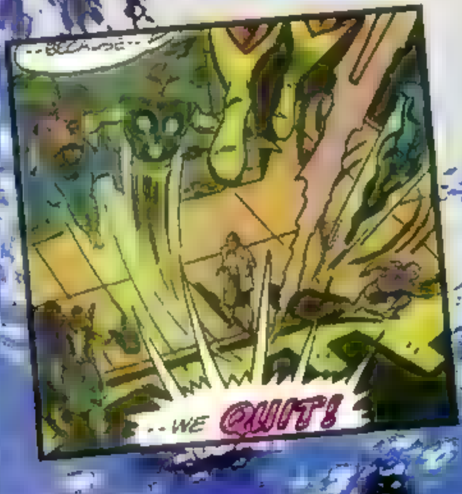

The remaining Defenders divided themselves into three teams and chose to put a stop to the insanity that Bill's documentary had wrought. Among the super-villains calling themselves "Defenders" were such heavyweights as the Porcupine, the Plantman, and the Blob! Whirlwind commented, "Being a DEFENDER is a real blast!" The good and evil Defenders mixed it up in a big brouhaha, which ended when the cops showed up and tried to arrest everyone!

The bad guys attempted to escape aboard the Staten Island Ferry—and they might have gotten away, if not for the Valkyrie flipping out! Suffering from Asgardian hallucinations, Val went berserk, mistaking everyone she saw for hideous trolls! (And maybe she was still a little steamed about everyone dumping her coffee!)

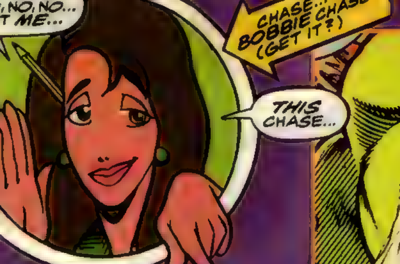


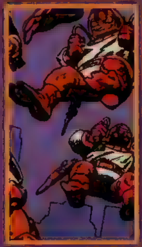

Val ripped into friend and foe alike. The villains were defeated, and the "new" Defenders decided they wanted no part of a team with such an unstable member. As his unwanted teammates departed, Nighthawk tried explaining what it took to be a Defender: "You've gotta be dedicated to belong! You've gotta be—" To which the Falcon chimed in, "You've gotta be CRAZY!" This non-stop lunacy was actually sustained for three hilarious issues of the DEFENDERS—#62-64.

Dollar Bill's plan had been to make the Defenders bigger than the Avengers. Since the DEFENDERS mag is not around anymore, obviously the plan didn't work! Wiith all this membership madness going on, it's no wonder that when the team was revived in the '90s, they called themselves The SECRET Defenders! They didn't want Dollar Bill to know they were back!



—**Barry Dutter**



# CHASING BOBBIE

***Think unparalleled knowledge of the Marvel Universe is enough to snag you a job at The House of Ideas? Figure the chances of finding true love at a comic book convention are pretty much zero? Would you bet on the fact that you've never chowed down on a gamma-rayed éntrée? Then meet Editor Bobbie Chase 'cause oh boy, has she ever got news for you!***

## THE USUAL STUFF:

**ROBERT: *What have you worked on?***

**BOBBIE:** It's probably easier to say that there aren't too many Marvel books that I haven't worked on over the years in some aspect. Currently I edit THE INCREDIBLE HULK, ELEKTRA, some of the STAR TREK line, the KITTY PRYDE: AGENT of S.H.I.E.L.D. limited series, and IRON MAN.

***How did you get started in comics?***

I was an English major working at a dead end job as a fit model in the fashion industry. I figured I'd work in magazine publishing at some point so when I saw an ad in the New York Times for a monthly graphic publication, I applied. I didn't know what the job was or what company had put up the posting. When I got there they said, "Is it okay that the position is with a comic book company?" My reaction was, "Cool!"

***Had you been a longtime comic fan?***

No! I actually didn't have any background in comics at the time. I had never even heard of the Fantastic Four! But my trial by fire was SECRET WARS II. So I learned a lot about the Marvel Universe in a very short time.

***Had you read any comics as a child?***

Sure. Mostly Archies and Harvey comics. Not any super-hero-based books though.

***What was the first Marvel Comic you really got into?***

The first comic I really enjoyed reading was Frank Miller's DAREDEVIL when it first came out. That title made me realize that although I was a grown woman, there was really something for me to get out of comics. But honestly, I got hooked on Marvel before I got hooked on comic books. The people and the atmosphere were—and still are—great.

***Did not having a running knowledge of the characters give you any advantages?***

Yes, in a sense. When I first started I asked my boss Bob Budiansky about that; he said he didn't want people with too many preconceived notions about who or what the characters were. He was actually looking for a person that could provide a perspective similar to someone picking up a comic book for the first time. At times, some art and story elements can get quite convoluted and it's important for an editor or assistant editor to be able to pick those things out and clean them up.

***How did you learn how to edit comics?***

As an Assistant Editor I had three great bosses: Bob Budiansky, Mike Carlin, and Bob Harras. I don't think I would have ever made a good editor if I hadn't worked with three different editors who had three different perspectives and styles.

***What part of editing do you enjoy the most?***

Opening the mail every morning and seeing what great stuff came in.

***What part of editing do you enjoy the least?***

Putting all the staples in the spine. (Laughs) That's an old Bob Budiansky joke.

## THE PERSONAL STUFF:

***Is 'Bobbie' your full name?***

It's actually short for Barbara. There are three Barbaras in my immediate family so we all have nicknames.

***Have you ever done television?***

Oh yes! I did some stuff for The Anti-Gravity Room and a couple of years ago I did this thing for the BBC that they keep re-airing on A&E. Every once in a while someone will come up to me and say, "Hey Bobbie, I saw you on TV again!" And there have been a couple of other things like little news bits.

***How tough is it to provide honest criticisms to industry professionals and hopefuls?***

It's easier once you develop a working relationship with the person. That's really what an editor needs to do. Regardless, when you're dealing with the creative process, sometimes being direct can be a problem because creativity is very personal. If someone you don't know asks for your opinion about their art or writing, sometimes they may not be fully prepared to accept what you have to say. You can't just come out and be rude. However, there are ways to be truthful and polite.

***Where do your influences come from?***

A million places. It changes all the time. Life's a big pond and we're just sponges.

***The ratio of men to women in the comic book industry has always been a little one-sided. Although it is changing, has that fact ever affected you?***

For the most part it's made no difference whatsoever. Overall, it's been very positive although there have been people who have told me they have problems dealing with a female editor. I've never really understood that.

Currently, I'm very glad to have a female assistant (the wacky Polly Watson) for the first time in my career, and I do wish there were more women in the industry. But the truth is, it's just as tough to get a job in the industry for females as it is for males and the unbalanced ratio is a direct result of the fact that there is a much greater male comic book following.

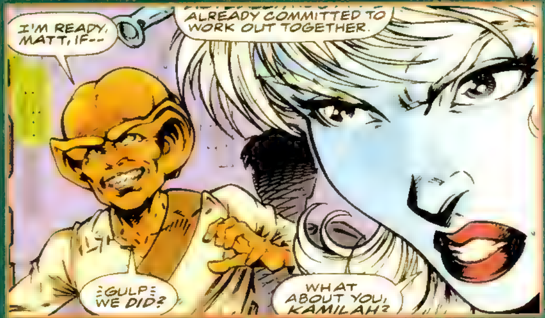
***Comics in general have taken a lot of heat for not representing female characters fairly. As a successful female industry professional, what are your thoughts on this?***

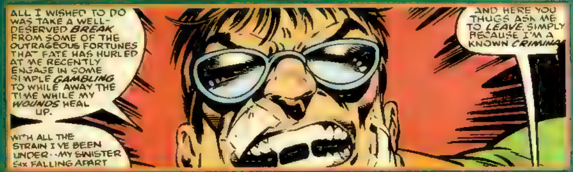
I think in many worst-case scenarios the heat is absolutely valid. In those cases women are drawn and written from a fantasy perspective.

***What changes should be implemented to turn that fact around?***

The most obvious would be anatomy. A more realistic anatomy and more realistic posing of female characters would be an immense improvement. Also, too many women characters are written as helpless victims. Although some stories might call for that type of character, because of the fact that there are too few role models for women in comics, I think it's important that writers stay away from that.

***Would it be fair to say that the anatomy element applies to male characters as well? That much muscle is also the stuff of fantasies.***





## THE OFF THE WALL STUFF YOU NEVER THOUGHT WE'D ASK:

***What exactly is a gamma ray?***

It's what they expose chickens to in order to give them a longer shelf life. Cool, huh?

***How many Elektras would it take to kick Hulk's butt?***

Just one could kick it, but he probably wouldn't feel it.

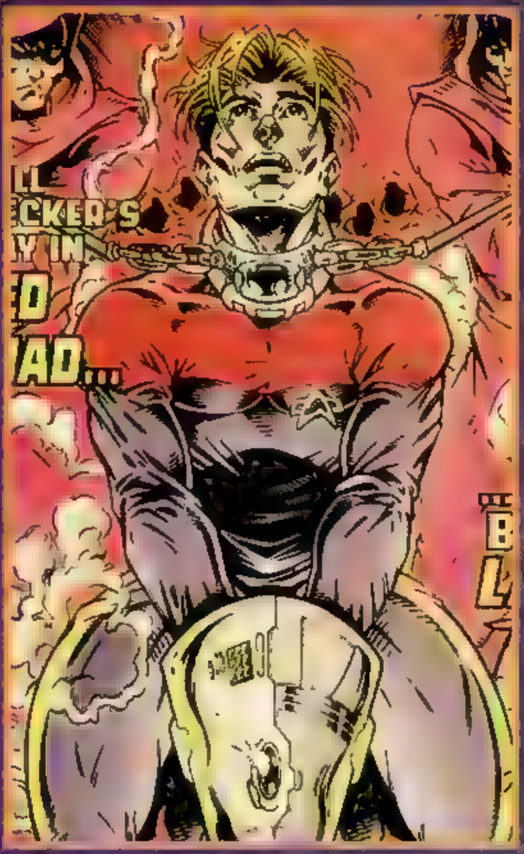
***How many fingers am I holding up? (This, by the way, was a phone interview)?***

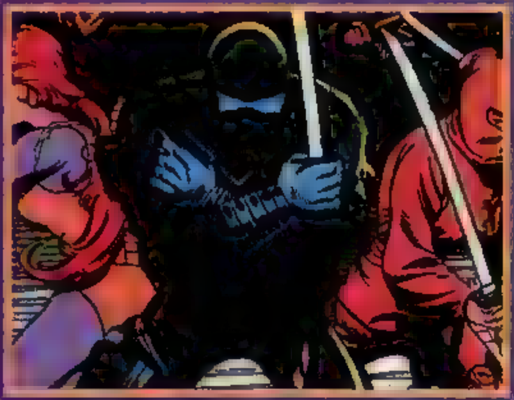
Ten.

***If Earth was visited by aliens—not Will Smith-take-over-the-stratosphere aliens, but more bookish, head-screwed-on-right aliens—and they had the technology to make one fictional hero into a real live person, who would you nominate?***

I think Iron Man. If we got hold of that technology I'd really like to have one of those suits. Or perhaps Captain America. It'd be very interesting to see what society would do with an idealized figurehead.

***What's the craziest comics-related experience you've ever had?***





True, but I still strongly believe it's worse for females for the simple reason that the male characters celebrate physical power in their stature whereas the female figures celebrate sexual presence. Of course, this isn't the case with all comics. I'm talking specifically about worst-case scenarios here. For example, I think Marvel tries harder than most publishers to represent women fairly.

***You've been editing the INCREDIBLE HULK for almost ten years now. What's your approach to that title after all these years?***

It has to be something fresh. We're always looking for ways of redefining the book and redeveloping the relationships to keep it exciting and new. If it doesn't feel like something new, then we know we're doing something wrong.

***What is the key to a great comic book?***

Everything! A comic has to have it all: action, drama, inner turmoil, love, hate and much more. I don't think that's asking too much. There has to be a good balance of all the elements.

I married someone I met at a convention. He used to work at First Publishing and we had a couple of mutual friends who were always trying to set us up. Finally, we met at a convention and eventually got together.

## THE SIGNING OFF STUFF:

***What new, exciting projects do you have under way?***

IRON MAN is being relaunched in December. We're very excited about that. Also Scott Lobdell is currently working on some new proposals, one of which is LEGION OF MONSTERS, and there may even be a Marvel Atlas in the works but it's too early to reveal any details just yet.

***Any hints as to what fans can expect from the books you oversee in the near future?***

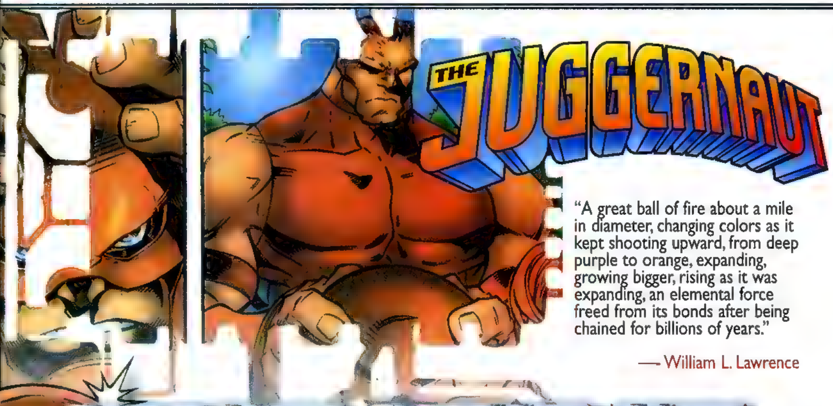
The usual: characters dying, characters living, new villains, and more talking dogs and LMDs.

***Any final thoughts you'd like to share with fans?***

Other than the fact that I'm having a lot of fun and I hope the readers are too? Nope, that's it.

By ROBERT PIOTROWSKI

© 1997 Mars Inc.
Twix
2x Chocolate Caramel
HE WHO UNWRAPS THE TWIX GETS BOTH BARS.
SPECIAL OFFICER
IT'S NOT JUST SAFE, IT'S THE LAW.
Twix
two for me. none for you.™




"A great ball of fire about a mile in diameter, changing colors as it kept shooting upward, from deep purple to orange, expanding, growing bigger, rising as it was expanding, an elemental force freed from its bonds after being chained for billions of years."

— William L. Lawrence

# BEAST FILES

The description of the first atom bomb explosion is one wracked with horror, fear, confusion and awe. It is a force of nature which once unleashed, had a ripple effect throughout all of humanity for a while. Its power is unfathomable and frightening. These same emotions I know all too well. I experienced them the first time I met the man known to the world as the unstoppable Juggernaut.

The Juggernaut was born Cain Marko. Cain's father was a co-worker and partner with Charles Xavier's [See File: Professor X] father and a close friend of the family until one day Cain's father allowed an accident to occur which caused the death of Xavier's father. Eventually Charles' mother and the widowed Marko were married and Cain became his stepbrother.

Jealous of the high regard his father showed towards Charles, Cain began abusing the young boy both mentally and physically. The larger Cain used his brutality even further when he began to suspect Charles of possessing the mutant ability to read minds. Eventually another accident occurred with one of the older Marko's experiments when Cain accidentally caused a reaction to take place which spontaneously combusted. Acting quickly, the boys' father took them both to safety but himself perished from smoke inhalation.

The loss of a father who had never fully been close to him, coupled with his guilt at having caused the accident in the first place, only hastened the crumbling of Cain's fragile psyche. Irrationally Cain's mind chose to blame Xavier for the death of his father; he would continue to blame all things ill in his life on the young Charles, a pattern which continues to this day.

Not long after college both Xavier and Cain found themselves in the military. By a quirk of fate, the brothers were stationed in the same unit on their European tour. During a fire-fight, Cain became frightened and decided to try to go AWOL. In an attempt to save his brother from court-martial, Xavier tracked him down. By sheer accident Cain and Xavier found themselves in an ancient hidden temple of the great universal power known as Cyttorak. There on the altar, the impetuous Cain snatched up a large ruby red crystal which turned out to be the Crimson Crystal of Cyttorak. Reciting the inscription, power instantly began coursing through Cain, shaping and molding him into the being known as Juggernaut.

The power began feeding into him so rapidly that the walls and roof of the ancient cavern began closing in all around him. Realizing what was indeed happening and acting as quickly as he could, Xavier managed to make it to safety before the entire structure collapsed around him. Knowing that a mystical change had happened to his brother and somehow using his psychic powers, Xavier prayed that the power of the Juggernaut had been contained forever.

Xavier's unspoken dreams were not to come true as years later the Juggernaut finally pummeled his way through his mountainous prison to freedom. Immediately, he made his way to America, moving ever forward with nothing standing in his way. It was by the narrowest of margins that the X-Men defeated him the first time with the aid of the Human Torch. And every subsequent defeat has been by ever narrowing margins. He truly lives up to his namesake, as he has gone toe-to-toe with such powerful beings as the Hulk [See File: Hulk] and Thor [See File: Thor], either triumphing or barely being beaten.

In recent years his craving for revenge on Charles Xavier seems to have lessened to a greater degree and he seems more content to simply be left alone. Furthermore, after a conflict with Onslaught [See File: Onslaught], the Juggernaut seemed more interested in working with rather than against the X-Men. The main cause of most of his current calamities has lain with his best friend and partner, Black Tom Cassidy [See File: Black Tom]. One can only pray that a being with near limitless power for destruction could be harnessed for good. For as the axiom goes, you can't stop the Juggernaut, and to date, we've at best delayed him.

## NOTES:

Juggernaut's chief power is that of pure mystical might. He is inhumanly strong, maxing out at a little over a 100-ton capacity in strength.

In addition, his body structure and mystical armor give him protection from conventional weaponry and are capable of withstanding the mountain-shattering blows of creatures such as the Hulk and Thor. Juggernaut is known to be able to generate a force field around himself that is completely impenetrable by any means, barring mental or magical attacks by a power higher than Cyttorak, which according to our good Dr. Strange [See File: Dr. Strange] does not exist. It is further said that once the Juggernaut begins moving, nothing can stop his forward progression. He is literally an unstoppable force. You can slow him, but nothing, not even the power of Thor's hammer Mjolnir, could halt him completely.

The Juggernaut's sole weakness is that of mental attacks. His armor, however, provides a complete psionic dampening field; thus to get to him you must first remove his helmet. In recent years, Juggernaut trimmed the size of his helmet and created a skullcap beneath it to further prevent this weakness from being exploited; thus it is not nearly the option it once had been.

the TORCH and SUB-MARINER!
By the SEA!
CAN'T TAKE MUCH... MORE OF THIS... HEAT..!
OH! GET A LOAD OF THIS GUY..!!
HEY, BUDDY! AIN'T IT HOT ENOUGH FER YOU, ALREADY?!?
BEAT IT, PAL! I DO WHAT I LIKE!!
SIZZLE!
DOES WHAT HE LIKES, EH!? WHY, I OUGHTTA..!!
SUCKK!
HEY, KID!! LEMME BORROW THAT PAIL!
GO CLIMB YER THUMB, FLATTOP!! I NEED IT FER MY CASTLE!
TOSS!
WHAT CASTLE!? HAW HAW HAW!!!
YIKES!!
GRAB
DOOF!!
WHAT'S THE FUSS!?!
HE ≥SNIF≤ ...HE...
CRY!
HEY, FIREBUG!! HAVE A DRINK, IT'S ON ME!
!?
SSSSS
PLOOF!
WHY YOU..!
HEY, BUDDY! IS IT HOT ENOUGH FER YOU, ALREADY!?!
ARF!!
FOOM!
OH, YOU ASKED FOR IT NOW..!
etc.

# MARVEL GETS A RIBBING

## THE SENSATIONAL SECRET ORIGIN OF "LI'L MARVELS"

©1997 Steven Weissman

Okay, so there's this great cartoonist out of San Francisco who loves yellow and whose first Marvel Comic was an issue of JUNGLE ACTION. His name is Steve Weissman and he writes, draws, colors and letters a comic no one reads called YIKES (and sometimes TYKES).

And despite the fact that no one reads it, it's really very clever, and it suggests that there are truths regarding the origin of man, even as far back as Adam and Eve, that have been well... fabricated— especially in regards to the Marvel Universe itself. Shocking.

According to Steve, we've only seen the history we're supposed to know. As lovers of truth in all its forms, we got an idea (this is, of course, the House Of Ideas, duh). What if Steve, whom everyone calls Ribs, retold the history of the Marvel Universe? The real history. The true history. So that the record could show for all to bear witness.

**The real reason the Invaders broke up!**
**How the Fantastic Four were really formed!**
**The true reason for the rivalry between Namor and the original Human Torch!**

So, despite Steve's fervor to just eat mint chocolate chip ice cream 24 hours a day, and acting as if he were ignorant of his desire to draw only the Incredible Hulk and the Vulture, this issue he will begin telling the true history of the Marvel Universe— before the modern myth-makers mucked it up.

So prepare yourself for enlightenment.

And for you scoffers of truth, you naysayers of anything that would threaten the establishment, those out there unwilling to spit in the eye of the dragon, ask yourself this... Why would a guy named Ribs lie?

# BIG BREAKS

Welcome to a brand new series of interviews featuring the story behind the storytellers. The idea is to not only give you, the fan, a sense of how your favorite creators got into the biz, but also to give you an idea of what it takes to work at mighty Marvel.

## Featuring John Ostrander

# This month, we're asking writer extraordinaire John Ostrander how he got into the comics business.

***MARVEL VISION:*** First of all, let's talk about your past credits. What were they?

***JOHN OSTRANDER:*** GRIMJACK, SUICIDE SQUAD, LEGENDS, FIRESTORM, GOTHAM NIGHTS, HAWKWORLD, THE KENTS, SPECTRE... and then, for Marvel... there's BISHOP, X.S.E., PUNISHER, X-MEN and, of course, HEROES FOR HIRE.

***MV:*** How did you break into comics?

***JO:*** This goes back about 15 years. I was living in Chicago, writing stage plays for the Chicago theater, and a friend of mine named Mike Gold asked me to write a comic script for him. He was in the process of putting together a new comic book company called First Comics. He knew I was a giant comic fan and gave me my first shot in the medium. So I did my first story and I haven't looked back since.

***MV:*** Are there any major influences or types of stories that have always inspired you?

***JO:*** It's funny. I once did a Doctor Who script for the theater and I am a giant Dr. Who fan.

***MV:*** Not to say we aren't, but why specifically?

***JO:*** I think that show, which is a serialized sci-fi thing in Britain, featuring the ongoing adventures of a Time Lord, is really a good example of how many different and diverse types of stories you can do in any particular genre.

***MV:*** Interesting. So it's like in HEROES FOR HIRE where you bring in a little magic in regards to the Black Knight's character, martial arts action and mysticism with Iron Fist and the White Tiger, humor with Hercules, and street action with Luke Cage.

***JO:*** Exactly. In fact, HEROES FOR HIRE, I think, is the most fun I've ever had writing a comic. I sometimes think that my career is based on me falling into one circumstance after another.

***MV:*** That's gravity for you. Explain...

***JO:*** Well, in the case of HEROES FOR HIRE, Roger Stern was supposed to be the writer, but when he quit to pursue some other projects, he suggested I become the regular writer.

***MV:*** What was your first Marvel work?

***JO:*** My first official work for Marvel was the first BISHOP limited series. Again, I fell into this opportunity to work with Carlos Pacheco on that series. And this happened because of a mutual friend who knew I was a Marvel fanatic who also knew an editor at Marvel named Suzanne Gaffney. Suzanne needed a writer and I needed to write. Funny how things work out like that.

***MV:*** When you say you were a major Marvel fanatic, are you saying you were an official Marvel Zombie... or a member of the Merry Marvel Marching Society...?

***JO:*** Let me put it this way... I was there when they killed Professor X the first time.

# "I GET BY WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM MY FRIENDS...": MARVEL'S SIDEKICKS AND SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

by Dean Davis

Let's face it, life would be pretty boring if you didn't have anyone to talk to. You'd basically just walk around all day saying, "I wish I had someone to talk to." Luckily, the Marvel Universe (and hopefully your lives) is rich with friends, family, and regretfully, enemies. In this issue of VISION we'll explore some of these supporting characters that inhabit your favorite comics. And yes, most villains are viewed as supporting characters; there might even be more bad guys than good guys in Marvel's world. I don't think Tim is ready to edit a 200 page edition of VISION to cover them, though. [No, I'm not.- Tim] We'll just stick with the ones on the right side of the law this time.

Before we begin I'll need to go over two points. First, I'm sure I'll forget someone's favorite. With only three pages to fill, someone will obviously be overlooked or dropped. I apologize. Secondly, even though most of them are labeled as main characters, the X-Men and company are a world unto themselves. Another 200 page edition I'll put on Tim's "To Do" list. [No, you won't.-Tim]

### THE ORIGINALS

Two of Marvel's original sidekicks are probably two of its most underrated characters. I'm speaking of Bucky and Toro. Let's evaluate them closely. James Buchanan "Bucky" Barnes somehow got into the Army while being blatantly underage! He walked in on Steve Rogers as he is getting dressed into his hero duds. "Whoa! Eyes front, soldier!" Cap then took him under his wing and teaches him the biz. At least Robin had some circus training; Bucky started from scratch. Here's the scene: Captain America was an enhanced soldier swinging a shield while the Allied forces are kicking Nazi butt with machine guns. Bucky was also there in the thick of it with...his fists! That's all! Nothing else! Unfortunately, Bucky came in contact with a booby-trapped "drone plane" of Baron Zemo's and...well, he was blown right out of the sky!

It's easy to think of Toro, the Flaming Kid, as one of Marvel's first mutants; the evidence can't be denied. He was found by The Human Torch (the android) while working as a sideshow fire eater, but for some unknown reason, flame did not harm him. The Torch then gladly instructed him on the use of his abilities.

Most of the heroes of the Golden Age were regular guys wearing capes or beings from an alien race or dimension. Occasionally you had the chemical mishap that gave us a new guy in town. Toro was a human who was born with his powers. Sounds like a mutant to us. Unfortunately (you knew it was coming), Toro was "extinguished" when he prevented the Mad Thinker from escaping in his jet aircraft. Let's just say that six hundred gallons of rocket fuel, some guy on fire, and an active volcano make for a great light show.

### HEY, GOOD BUDDY

We all have one or two really special friends who can help us through anything. It's good to have some buds to kick back with after a long day of fighting evildoers. Many times these friends aren't aware of your alter ego. Sometimes they do know and even manage to help you in your busy workday.

Jim Rhodes was hired as an employee of Stark Enterprises and impressed the boss enough to become his right-hand man. He knows aviation, weapons systems, electronics, and computers. If you find yourself passed out drunk on the floor, he'll even strap on the armor and fill in for you (read those back issues, folks). Rhodey has his own high tech armor nowadays, although his paint job isn't as cool as Tony's.

There are other characters who were once known as sidekicks but now call their own shots. Sam Wilson (a.k.a. the Falcon) is a fine example. Once under the tutelage of Captain America, Falcon has since gone out on his own while also holding down a day job as a social worker. That's one tough schedule.

Foggy Nelson knew Matt Murdock from their college days. Upon graduation, they went into a law practice together. Unlike his best friend, he has never shown the ambition to become a costumed avenger. To tell you the truth, I don't think I'd want to see Foggy running around in spandex. [But we all did in Silliest Moments.-Tim]

### THE SOFTER SIDE

Strong female supporting characters have been a mainstay in the pages of Marvel Comics. A good number of these gals knew their hero's secret identity, thereby adding proof to the fact that you can't hide anything from a woman.

Way before Bill Gates made nerds semi-fashionable, Peter Parker went steady with Gwen Stacy, cozied up to the Black Cat, and ended up marrying Mary Jane Watson. Not bad for a science geek.

Other notable females who filled out the time and/or a tight outfit in Marvel history are Sharon Carter, Alicia Masters, Colleen Wing, Misty Knight, the Black Widow, Clea, and Shalla Bal. In the "Betty" department, we have Betty Brant and Betty Ross, who should both be marriage counselors for what they've had to endure. Last, but not least, we have Karen Page, the perky blonde secretary who worked at Matt Murdock's office. Eventually she became strung out on drugs and sold the Kingpin information on Daredevil's true identity. Gee...thanks, Karen...that'll keep you on the Christmas card list.

### YOU RANG?

There are two men who hold the honors of being a confidant to some really powerful people while they keep the house nice and tidy. Edwin Jarvis has been dusting the halls of Avengers Mansion for years, while Wong has been the aide to Dr. Strange since he bought his mysterious home in Greenwich Village.

Even though Jarvis can successfully get those nasty Kree moondust stains out of a costume, I truly believe Wong has a tougher job. I mean, think about it...Dr. Strange burns a bazillion candles to illuminate the place and is constantly opening up weird dimensional portals right there in the living room! Do you know what kind of gunk and grime that leaves on the carpets?! Once, they had to buy all new furniture because they couldn't get the smell out. Not even with magic! The biggest mess Jarvis deals with is when Ultron blows up the east wing or the Inhumans come over to visit. I'm tellin' ya, sometimes Lockjaw just can't wait for that walk in the park. Bad doggie!

### A MIND OF THEIR OWN?

This next grouping of "characters" could easily be the subject of a philosophical debate on their viability to carry the label of "sidekick." I speak of Thor's hammer and Silver Surfer's board. Both these objects at times seemingly have a "mind" of their own while showing total loyalty to their masters. They arrive when summoned, the Silver Surfer's board will bop somebody in the head when instructed to do so, and it's a really rare occasion

# ...I'm tellin' ya, sometimes Lockjaw just can't wait for that walk in the park.

when they fall under the influence of another. It's the same mindset when you watch a Herbie the Love Bug movie. You sit there and cheer that little Volkswagen on like he was part of the team. By the way, Cap's shield, Thor's hammer and Daredevil's billy club don't fall in this category. They must be thrown accurately by their masters to hit a target.

### THE ONE AND ONLY

The Marvel Universe is home to a man who can easily hold the claim of being "The Ultimate Sidekick and/or Supporting Character." He has no fancy super hero name, his biggest talent is playing the guitar, and his costume is a pair of jeans and a t-shirt. He's Rick Jones and he's seen it all.

It was more than a few years ago when that orphaned teenager snuck onto a military test site on a dare from his friends. Since that time, he's met or assisted some of Marvel's mightiest. Rick has been a best friend to the Hulk since day one. He's helped out Captain Marvel, Rom and the Avengers on numerous occasions. Captain America personally oversaw his training as the new Bucky, and let's not forget that time he was the Hulk for a while.

### WHO'S YOUR FAVORITE?

"Microchip from the Punisher books. He was a great character...simple as that."

— Chuck Dixon

"Zabu, Ka-Zar's sabretoothed friend. He's the real brains of the outfit."

— Mark Waid

"Bucky and Toro - because they're dead."

— Roy Thomas

"At the moment I'm pretty enamored of Alicia Masters (in SILVER SURFER). She's a character I never really thought about very much, but, since writing her in SURFER, she's really come alive for me."

— J.M. DeMatteis

"As for characters I created, I like Blade, Hannibal King, Black Cat, Diamondhead, The Sphinx, and Harold B. Harold. As for non-me created characters: J. Jonah Jameson and Dr. Doom."

— Marv Wolfman

"The Falcon when he had the orange and green costume. I liked his over-all simplicity. Also, I thought it was cool he was named the Falcon but he originally didn't have any wings."

— Ron Frenz

"Hercules around THOR #220. The interplay between Hercules and Thor was interesting to watch."

— Brett Breeding

"Jim Rhodes is a noble character who held his own with an equally noble, but different, Tony Stark. He was a homegrown kind of guy. Also, nothing beats a classic Bucky Barnes by Lee and Kirby."

— David Michelinie

"Hercules and Kevin Masterson. Hercules showed Thor and Thunderstrike the potential of having such great power and how much fun they can have with that power. Kevin Masterson [Eric's son] because he always reminded both Thor and Eric Masterson about the humanity they should never lose while they were using that power. Here're two guys hooked into the same series that showed two uniquely different things while helping the main character."

— Tom DeFalco

"Zelda, from the original run of X-Men, the ruefully optimistic coffee-house waitress who was attracted to Bobby Drake in spite of (or perhaps because of?) his perpetual lack of money and undependability. She had such a fun attitude -- very much like Jean Arthur in the movie 'Mr. Smith Goes to Washington' -- that I find her completely irresistible."

— Kurt Busiek

Greatest Comics Never Seen

# THE PRISONER

## "I will not be pushed, filed, indexed, stamped, briefed, debriefed or numbered. My life is my own." —The Prisoner

And yet... for a certain comic book written and drawn by Jack "The King" Kirby and slated to be released in the '70s, the Prisoner was filed, indexed and numbered—in the annals of the unfinished masterpieces. For this work became a captive of the back closets—the hidden warehouses—the lost rooms within the House of Ideas.

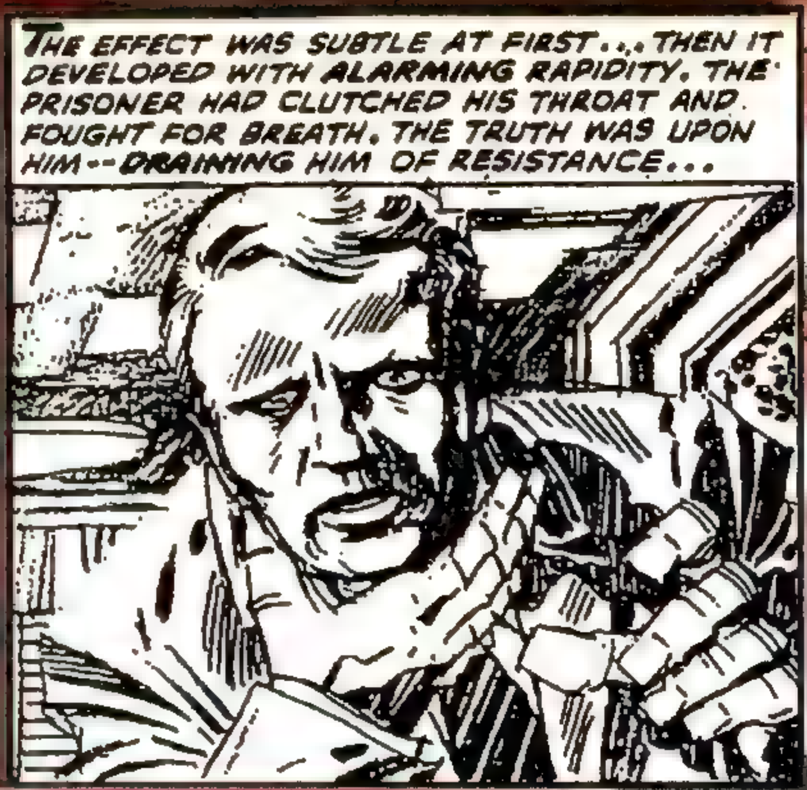
But there is freedom for every prisoner in **THE GREATEST COMICS NEVER SEEN.**

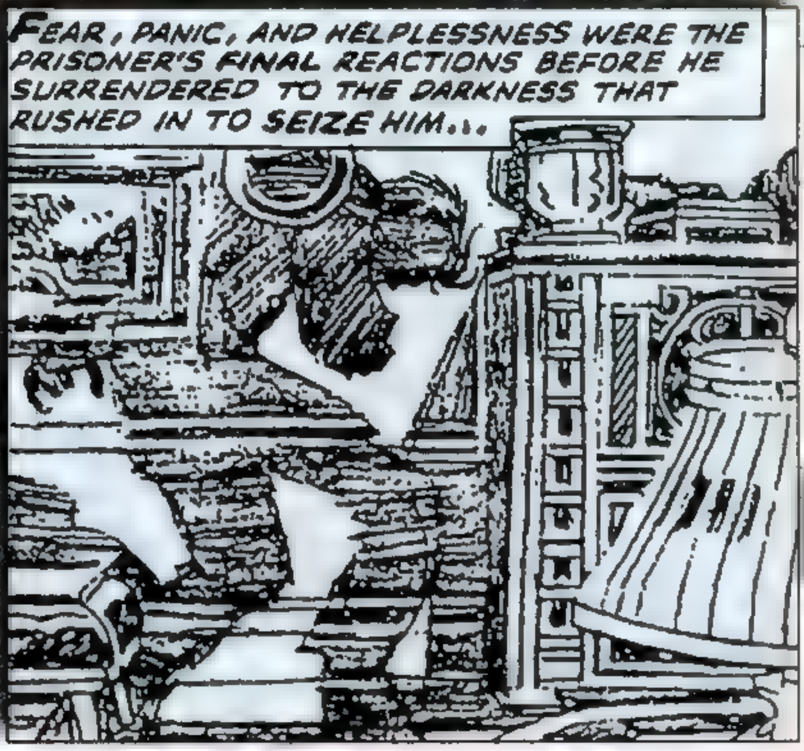
Sometimes the best of projects never come to fruition. In the '70s, during Jack Kirby's return to Marvel, which featured his takes on both old and new characters alike—books which even today retain a cult status among the lovers of Jack's works, books like CAPTAIN AMERICA, THE BLACK PANTHER, 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY, DEVIL DINOSAUR and MACHINE MAN—Jack set his sights on TV's most talked-about series. Even though THE PRISONER, based on the 17-episode series starring and produced by *Secret Agent's* Patrick McGoohan, was never published by Marvel, these Xeroxes of the work completed on the first issue were found in the vaults a few months ago. THE PRISONER comic book was even announced in the Bullpen Bulletins. But somehow... it all disappeared. Was the art lost? Was the project scrapped?

There is a sign in the Village, which was the Prisoner's prison, which read: "Questions are a burden to others; answers a prison to oneself."

We do know that the pages were being inked by Jack's longtime inking partner Mike Royer, who inked many of the projects Jack had done for both Marvel and "the distinguished competition."

Now you will see and learn of the Village and of the war that was waged there.





## WHO IS THE PRISONER?

That was the thing. No one knew. He had no name. He told his jailers that he was a person, not a number, and yet to us, he was only known as Number Six.

We know he was a secret agent who decided to resign his post. We never learned who he was working for. The information within his head was considered priceless to any agency on Earth.

After his adamant resignation from the agency, he headed home, where he was hit with knockout gas by a man driving a hearse.

He awoke a Prisoner in a beautiful European city known simply as the Village. He awoke with no other name than Number Six.

## INFORMATION

"Whose side are you on?" He asked them.
"That would be telling," Number Two replied.
"Who is Number One?
"You are Number Six."
"What do you want?"
"Information," a new Number Two replied.
"You won't get it."
"By hook or by crook we will."

"The Prisoner" told the story of freedom of the mind and the soul... the refusal to bow before the dictates of the majority. It was about being your own man or woman. About having the courage to take a stand when the whole world told you to sit down. And, of course, that's why it was so perfect for Marvel Comics.

"By hook or by crook" took the form of truth drugs, experimental torture devices, betrayals, a giant guard called Rover, Duplicate people, bombs, escapes, Armageddon theories and more.

The Prisoner revealed what was wrong with society. It was drama in the most satiric of styles.

In the end, some believe the Prisoner never escaped. Or perhaps, because he never bowed, never gave his reasons for resigning despite the manipulations of his captors, he was always free.

The fans know it. The retailers know it. Heck, even our competitors know it. Marvel Comics is #1. And Editor-in-Chief Bob Harras plans on keeping it that way. How? Why? Where? In an impressive feat of persistence and endless begging, Robert 'Double Scoop' Piotrowski corralled the man behind the World's Greatest Comics and got answers to the questions on every Marvel Visionary's mind (as well as a couple of others that he just made up on the spot).

The last time we talked (MARVEL VISION #6), you had just been appointed Editor-in-Chief and things were very hectic at Marvel. Have they settled down any since then?

BOB: It's definitely less chaotic than two years ago but Marvel is always a little bit chaotic. I think that's part of its charm. It's controllable chaos though.

What have you learned since becoming the 'Man Behind Marvel' two years ago?

It's actually much, much harder than I ever imagined. My hat --if I were wearing one--would go off to anyone who held this position in the past. It's fun because you work with a lot of people and a lot of characters but the actual day-to-day responsibilities can be daunting at times.

As Editor-in-Chief, do you still work on any comic books directly?

Not on a day-to-day basis. I'm still involved with long term planning of all the books we put out but, I'm sad to say, the days when I worked directly with the writers and artists are over. Instead, I meet with the other departments at Marvel and take care of the big picture.

Let's talk about those nifty foldout covers currently included in all the books. The ones with all the previous plot summaries and character profiles. Where did that concept come from and can fans count on it sticking around for a while?

That concept actually came from our comics that were published in Japan. Background information for the Japanese fans was presented in a very interesting, graphic way. They've been very well received so far. At the San Diego Comicon we got an ovation when some fans thanked us for those gatefolds. I think they're really cool and as long as the fans are into them, we'll continue providing them.

A lot of heroes seem to be returning from the past, for example Moon Knight, Werewolf by Night, and Conan. Is this a conscious decision to get back to Marvel's roots?

Most of those relaunches are a result of a meeting we had two years ago in New Jersey where we asked many of our top writers and artists to come up with characters that they would like to see come back. A lot of it had to do with those creators wanting Marvel to get back to its roots. Many just suggested certain heroes as fans, not industry professionals. They simply wanted to see a particular character back on the stands. And that's what's really interesting about the whole thing: the ideas for these books didn't come from the editorial department alone but instead from the creators themselves.

Since we're on the topic of past and present, let's talk annuals. For a while there, annuals were often drawn and written by new talent. However, this has changed drastically. Is that because you wanted these projects to carry more weight in the minds of readers than ever before?

I think that in the past, annuals have been forgotten until the last minute because of the work load they pose for editors and creators. But fans count on annuals to be important to the main titles, so having them as integral elements in a character's history and story continuity is definitely part of the game plan now.

Which Marvel hero would you want employed as your assistant?

One thing I know for sure is I want Mr. Fantastic's power for myself. I'm very lazy and I've always wanted to stretch my arm out and grab a coffee without getting out of my chair. As far as my assistant goes . . . (pause) . . . you know what, my assistants right now are so cool I don't think I'd want anybody else. They're superheroic enough. Isn't that beautiful?

Oh man, I should've seen that one coming.

Hey, even I didn't see it coming until Jason (Bob's Assistant) walked in and I figured I should say something nice. [Laughter]

Let's move on to specifics. What's up with the changes on the X-Men books as far as writers go?

Right now the X-Men core titles will be a team effort from Steve Seagle (UNCANNY X-MEN) and Joe Kelly (X-MEN). They're working hand in hand and that's very interesting and very enjoyable to watch. It's also unique as far as those titles go. No doubt, it'll result in slightly different voices on those books and they'll hopefully go in two different directions as well. Scott Lobdell had a wonderful run on the books but it's always good to challenge a writer with new projects. Needless to say, we're all waiting to see what new adventures he'll find for the Fantastic Four to embark on.

You yourself gave up writing AVENGERS in exchange for your responsibilities as Editor-in-Chief. Do you miss writing comics?

Not in the least. I'm glad some readers liked my run on AVENGERS but, to be honest, I was never really satisfied with what I was doing because I could never give it as much attention as I felt the book needed.

There's no question that you've worked with some--if not most--of the best in the business. Can you ever remember being intimidated by anyone when it came to comics and publishing?

Yes. Some days I still can't quite believe I'm talking to Stan Lee. Once in a while, I'll just sit back and say to myself, "I'm talking to Stan Lee, the guy I worshipped when I was a kid." But the secret is, instead of letting that feeling of intimidation get the best of you, always trust your instincts and the people you're working with.

You just picked up the Wizard Fan Award as Favorite Editor for the bazillionth time. That's gotta be a good feeling.

It's great because that award comes directly from fans. When I was in San Diego a lot of fans and retailers came up to me and said they noticed

that the books--to their minds--were getting better. So it's nice to have the fact that we're working to right whatever perceived wrongs Marvel did in the past and getting the books back on track recognized.

Editors don't usually get that much fan attention. How've you managed to keep such a high profile?

I really don't know. To be honest, having your name in an X-book doesn't hurt. But honestly, I really couldn't say.

Outside of giving these crazy interviews, you lead a regular life like the rest of us. But to many you are a celebrity in your own right. Have you ever been recognized on the street by fans?

Actually, yes. Twice in recent years. Once in a comic store and once in a video store which really floored me. I can understand readers knowing me in a comic shop but not in a video store in my own neighborhood. I just thought 'Whoa!'

Both the Age of Apocalypse and Heroes Reborn featured established characters misplaced in new environments. Can you explain why this type of approach has been so successful?

I think everyone wants to see their favorite heroes challenged by something that is totally unexpected. The Age of Apocalypse definitely did that. I think it was a very well crafted story with a background that had as much character as the heroes themselves. Heroes Reborn I can't take credit for because Jim [Lee] and Rob [Liefield] were really the ones who worked it out. But again it all goes back to the fact that people love seeing these characters challenged in new ways.

Will Heroes Reborn be treated as just another adventure or will it have lasting repercussions within the Marvel Universe?

I think when you have a storyline that lasts as long as Heroes Reborn did, there has to be some sort of repercussion. There are already some planned so it won't be just another story. But will we always go back to it as a focal point? Perhaps, but I don't think it'll be our major focus for the next three years.

So Franklin has created the pocket universe. How do you let a character that powerful run around the earth without blowing it to smithereens?

Franklin has always been a bit of a problem. Back in the '70s Reed shut his mind down for a couple of months. I think what's going to happen, if I'm remembering Scott's proposal correctly, is the Fantastic Four will learn that Franklin's powers are very erratic in nature. They reach a focal point and then recede to a point of almost non-existence, like a solar flare. So I'm sure the FF will have one monstrous threat on their hands when those powers flare up again but for now he'll be relatively harmless.

For the past two years or so, creators have been switching books quite often. Will the return of the heroes finally settle concrete line-ups?

That's what we're hoping for, yes. If the teams are happy and the fans are happy then we'd like them to stay as they are now for as long as possible. Switching creative teams leads to fans experiencing a sense of disassociation with their favorite titles and characters. Readers want a sense of commitment there and that's what we'll be striving to give them.

What gets you through a day of Editor-in-Chiefing?

Several cups of coffee. Also, the fact that I think the product is good. These are characters and books that I loved when I was younger and I think they're getting better and better every month. Without progress like that I couldn't be here every day.

What is 'Bobbling'?

Apparently, some people on staff here claim that I make up facts in order to make a point during a conversation.

Example?

Fifty-six percent of giraffes are skittish animals. Apparently, that's 'Bobbling'.

What would you say is your key approach to the current success of Marvel Comics?

I think you always have to ensure that you don't get complacent and cocky and say, "Hey, we're the #1 comic book company and look at the sales and nothing's wrong." Instead, you should always look at things like, "Okay, we did pretty well here but let's try and do even better next time." No matter what, you should always try to improve.

How much further does Marvel have to go to emulate your full...ahem...Marvel Vision? Or has the present Marvel Universe already exceeded your expectations?

I certainly can't take credit for the Marvel Universe but as a whole, I think we're getting there. We have people like Carlos Pacheco and George Pérez and John Romita Jr, and we're getting a lot of good stuff out there. It's a process. Are we ever going to be a perfect publishing enterprise? No, but our goal is to get pretty darn close.

In a recent interview with Bobbie Chase (see page 34), she mentioned that although fair representation of females in comics has a long way to go, Marvel is trying harder than most publishers to make that a reality. What steps has Marvel taken to aid the cause for equality among heroes?

I always try to make people aware of the fact that I don't want women portrayed as victims or patsies in our books. They've got to be full and equal characters. One of the guidelines I use is Chris Claremont's UNCANNY X-MEN where the female characters were equal to the men. I doubt we'll ever have a line of books where the women aren't wearing skintight costumes, but what we have to make sure of is that they're not just standing around posing. They should be just as powerful, insightful, and relatable as male characters.

What with toys, cards, TV shows, and upcoming movies, the Marvel enterprise has really grown lately. Can you see any other expansions in the near future?

The online world is where we're going next. The America OnLine site is growing every month and there's a lot of things in the works as far as that medium goes. It should be very exciting to see where we'll be taking all of that.

What new projects can fans look forward to in the coming year?

All of them! Of course you want me to get specific, right? Well, there's the MAN-THING and BLADE books that I think'll be very cool. They'll be very different. There's also some science fiction stuff as well as some gothic-type books coming out. Those should be a lot of fun as well because we'll be expanding on the super hero aspect while continuing the Marvel tradition. Also, we have a really unique Marvel trivia book in the works that I think readers will definitely enjoy.

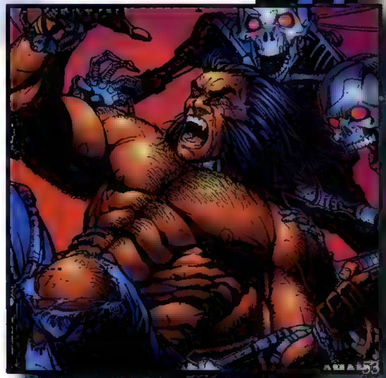
What about new artists and writers? Who's hot?

That's tough because I don't want to exclude anyone. I'd say Joe Kelly for one. I think he's got some great stuff going on in DAREDEVIL, DEADPOOL, and X-MEN. Also Steve Seagle has some exciting stuff planned. The Spider-Man guys have a lot of surprises lined up in that line as well. Again, everyone. There'll be a lot going on in the year to come.

Fair enough. In conclusion, can you give a general projection of Marvel Comics in the year 2000?

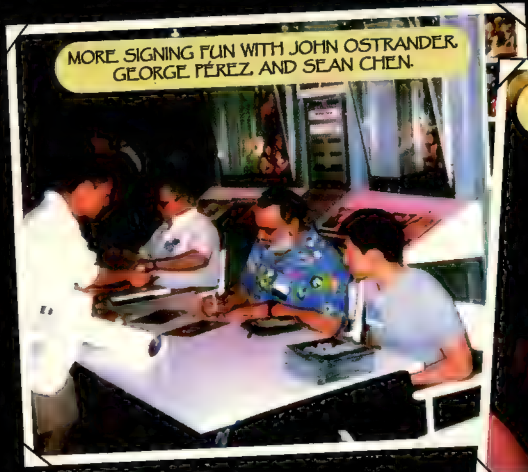
We'll still be #1 but there'll be more books and we'll be an even bigger presence right across the board.

—Robert 'Double Scoop' Piotrowski



SKI AND BOB RIGHT BEFORE THEY BEAT ME UP AND TRY TO STEAL MY CAMERA.

ON OUR WAY HOME. GLENN GREENBERG, ME, MARK BERNARDO, RALF.



MORE SIGNING FUN WITH JOHN OSTRANDER, GEORGE PÉREZ AND SEAN CHEN.

THE SPIDER PANEL BREAKS UP AND THE GUYS MEET THE FANS. MIKE WEIRINGO, JOHN ROMITA JR., AND RALF MACCHIO.

# SAN DIEGO SCRAPBOOK

I ACHIEVED MY SAN DIEGO GOAL. THE ACE FREHLEY ACTION FIGURE! YES!!

MARVEL'S JOHN DOKES BUSY AS USUAL.

THE SPIDER PANEL BEFORE THE FUN BEGINS. TODD DEZAGO, RICHARD CASE, AND MIKE WEIRINGO.

TOY BIZ'S TOY BOYS DAMON NEE AND JESSE FALCON MUG FOR THE CAMERA.

THE GANG FROM THE MARVEL GAMES PANEL.

STAR TREK UNLIMITED'S RON RANDALL AT ARTIST ALLEY.

PAUL TUTRONE CONTEMPLATES SAYING HELLO TO 35,000 FANS.

SOME FUN AT THE SIGNING BOOTH. CHRIS BACHALO, RON GARNEY, AND JOHN ROMITA JR.

# UNTOLD TALES OF TREK UNLEASHED AT LAST!

Remember the Star Trek original television series? Aliens, intrigue, boldly going where no television series had gone before... and doing it in really cool clothes? Remember Star Trek: The Motion Picture? Featuring the classic crew on the classic ship, embarking on their second five-year mission? Ever wondered what happened between that first, wild escapade of the second mission and Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan? Still scratching your head over unanswered questions like why Kirk chose to become an admiral again in Star Trek II, when he obviously hated the job so much at the beginning of the first movie? Or pondering the possible chain of events that brought Spock and Saavik so close together?

STOP! No more questions (or question marks, for that matter)! From now on, it's only answers in the pages of STAR TREK: THE UNTOLD VOYAGES, a trail-blazing five-issue limited series that makes its debut January 1998! Each of these five totally new tales corresponds with the matching year of Kirk's second five-year mission aboard the Enterprise — that is to say, issue #1 will feature an unchronicled event from the first year of that mission, #2 details events occurring in the second year, and so it goes, up to issue #5, a whopping double-sized issue taking place in the final year of the mission. As sort of an extra bonus, each issue is a complete, self-contained story! And each story focuses on a specific member of the crew, so you just know that your personal fave is bound to be among them!

"The first issue picks up right where Star Trek: The Motion Picture left off," confirms writer Glenn Greenberg, "and it focuses on Captain Kirk, naturally! He's just gotten his ship back, they've saved Earth and the Federation from the threat of the V'Ger, and now he's not sure that Starfleet is going to let him retain command of the Enterprise." Apparently, Kirk's fears are not entirely unfounded, despite the approval his recent heroics have won him. "When the first movie begins, Kirk has been at a desk for two and one-half years. After being out of the loop so long, he's not quite as effective as he used to be, and he himself is wondering if he isn't too rusty to command the ship. This was touched upon in the movie, in the scene where he's first back onboard the ship, and doesn't even know where the turbo-lifts are!" Let's hope he can find the phasers, because faster than you can say, "Beam me up, Scotty — and step on it!" the legendary captain and his loyal crew run head-on into a crisis situation that will either make Kirk's second captaincy — or break his beloved ship!

Subsequent issues serve up hefty portions of crisis, camaraderie and character insight as well. For example, issue #2 details the events that formed the bond between Spock and Saavik, the young female Vulcan navigator who worked closely with Spock while she trained at Starfleet Academy. While various takes on this hot topic have been done in other comics and novels, Glenn and editor Tim Tuohy are

confident that their story is a real attention-getter. "We'll see what brought them together in the first place, when Saavik was a child, as well as the way in which their relationship developed from there," says Glenn. "Also, we'll get to see how the Enterprise crew react to a crisis in Spock's absence."

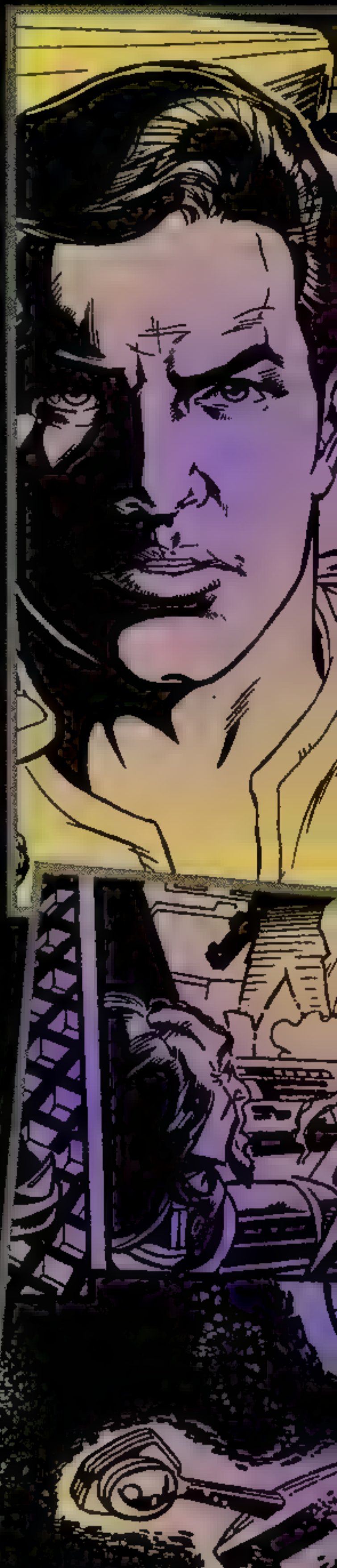
Another concept which has been dealt with in other formats before, but which Tim and Glenn also thought merited a closer look, is the story of Dr. McCoy's daughter. "We're taking the premise that was going to be done in the original television series in an episode written by D.C. Fontana, where McCoy's daughter came onboard the Enterprise and got involved with Captain Kirk. Needless to say, this didn't sit well with ol' Bones, and it eventually drove a wedge between him and Kirk." The episode, originally entitled "Joanna," wasn't too popular with the series' producers, and wound up being so heavily rewritten that Fontana asked that her name be replaced with a pseudonym in the credits. The final product, "Way to Eden," instead featured Chekov's old girlfriend from the Academy... who was interested only in Chekov.

"Marvel actually did a story based on the aborted original episode fifteen or so years ago," explains Glenn, "where Joanna McCoy is engaged to marry a Vulcan. I think that Tim's and my take [which will be much more true to the original concept] is more in keeping with the television series. Of all the stories, I think this one has the most classic Trek feel to it."

Glenn is slightly more conservative in his estimate. He does acknowledge that "the fourth issue will focus on the rest of the crew. We'll see Sulu taking those first steps toward command, Chekov dealing more with the sciences, as he's a science officer by Star Trek II, and Scotty acting as a miracle worker. Also, we'll get to see Chapel running the sick bay without Dr. McCoy." Phew! After all this independence, where will the final issue wind up?

"That's the big, double-sized wrap-up issue, and we're looking at it as a movie compared to a television series," Glenn gleefully announces. "A lot of it shows the way Kirk deals with the end of his second five-year mission aboard the Enterprise, and we'll finally understand why he agreed to become an admiral again before Wrath of Khan. We'll also show the trajectory of Chekov's career and of course, bring the Enterprise home!"

Wow! Now that you've had a peek at the guts of the series, let's take a look at the glory — that is to say, the art! STAR TREK: THE UNTOLD VOYAGES is being penciled by Michael Collins, who's already done a fantastic job on several issues of STAR TREK: EARLY VOYAGES. But there's no chance he'll get the two confused on the drafting table: Michael set all other projects aside to work on UNTOLD. "Mike is a terrific collaborator, and he's giving one hundred and ten percent on this job," says Glenn. The proof is on the pages forthcoming... as well as on pages you won't see! Glenn elaborates: "We created a new alien species for issue #2, and not only did his design exactly reflect my specifications, but he also submitted drawings showing the species' evolutionary track from birth to adulthood!" "Glenn had asked for a species that looked like a cross between a dinosaur



and a seal," explains Mike. "I wanted it to have a fierce quality, and not look like something you'd use to block a draft with by shoving it against the door!"

The same sense of dedication is apparent on the pages. "Mike's sense of pacing is terrific — so terrific that it actually forces me to work harder at scripting," admits a sheepish Glenn. "It's not like the television series, which can be very talky. You can't get away with a two-minute soliloquy without covering up all the pictures! Mike's art forces me to take all the information and put it across in the most concise way possible."

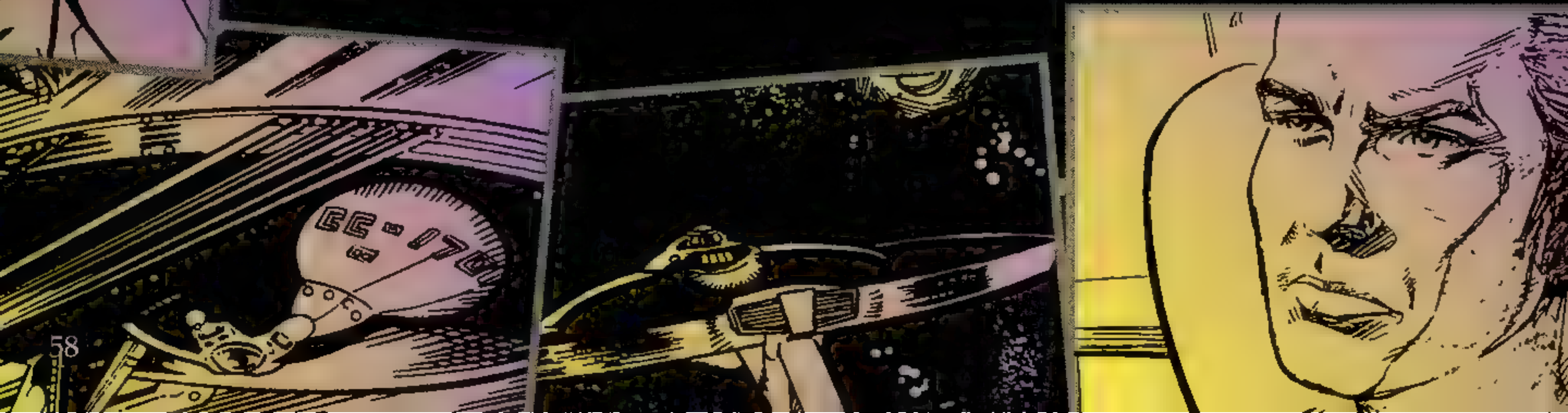
"It was an exciting challenge, filling in the blanks between the two movies," says Mike. "The really hard part was that I had to draw the characters a few years after the first five-year mission had ended. Flattery was the key!" Some characters proved less challenging than others, however. "This was my first time drawing Captain Kirk, and it wasn't tough at all. It was a bit scary, in fact — I realized that he's a permanent part of my psyche!"

While Mike was in his studio poring over piles of reference in order to portray the best possible likenesses, Glenn and Tim were in the Marvel offices pooling their own resources to get the best and most true-to-continuity stories. While they did refer to Simon and Schuster's Star Trek Encyclopedia on a regular basis, perhaps the most valuable resource available to them was their own combined knowledge of all things Trek — movies, TV series, comics and novels. "We're geeks," admits Glenn humbly. "But that sad fact really served us well on this project!" In fact, the project itself is a result of the two Trek aficionados sitting around Tim's office one evening, playing "what if?" with their favorite Star Trek episodes. While this ultimately spawned UNTOLD TALES, some wackier ideas were initially bandied about.

"At first, Tim and I were joking that we'd call it the "Gray Pajama Saga," because that's what all the outfits in Star Trek: The Motion Picture looked like," says Glenn. "We didn't bother presenting that idea to Paramount!" Still, it didn't seem as though things were destined to go their way in the beginning. "The first draft I gave [Paramount] of the first issue featuring Captain Kirk didn't sit well with them at all," recalls Glenn. "I wanted a much smaller story about Kirk's search for faith in himself, but Paramount wanted something much bigger for him to deal with, something of epic proportions. At first I was concerned that I couldn't fit it all into the 22-page format, but it worked! Since then, everything's been great with Paramount! I've heard horror stories about working on licensed books, but I think a lot of that comes from creators wanting to put their own stamp on a franchise without being aware of or following the guidelines. Or maybe they want to change a character. But there are things you just can't do — you can't have Kirk lose a hand, or turn him into a robot, or get killed! My goal isn't to change the characters, but to learn the guidelines, take what's there, and then make the stories as interesting and as fresh as possible within those parameters."

So welcome to STAR TREK: THE UNTOLD VOYAGES —where nobody loses a hand and everybody gains some new insight into classic characters!

**—Polly Watson**



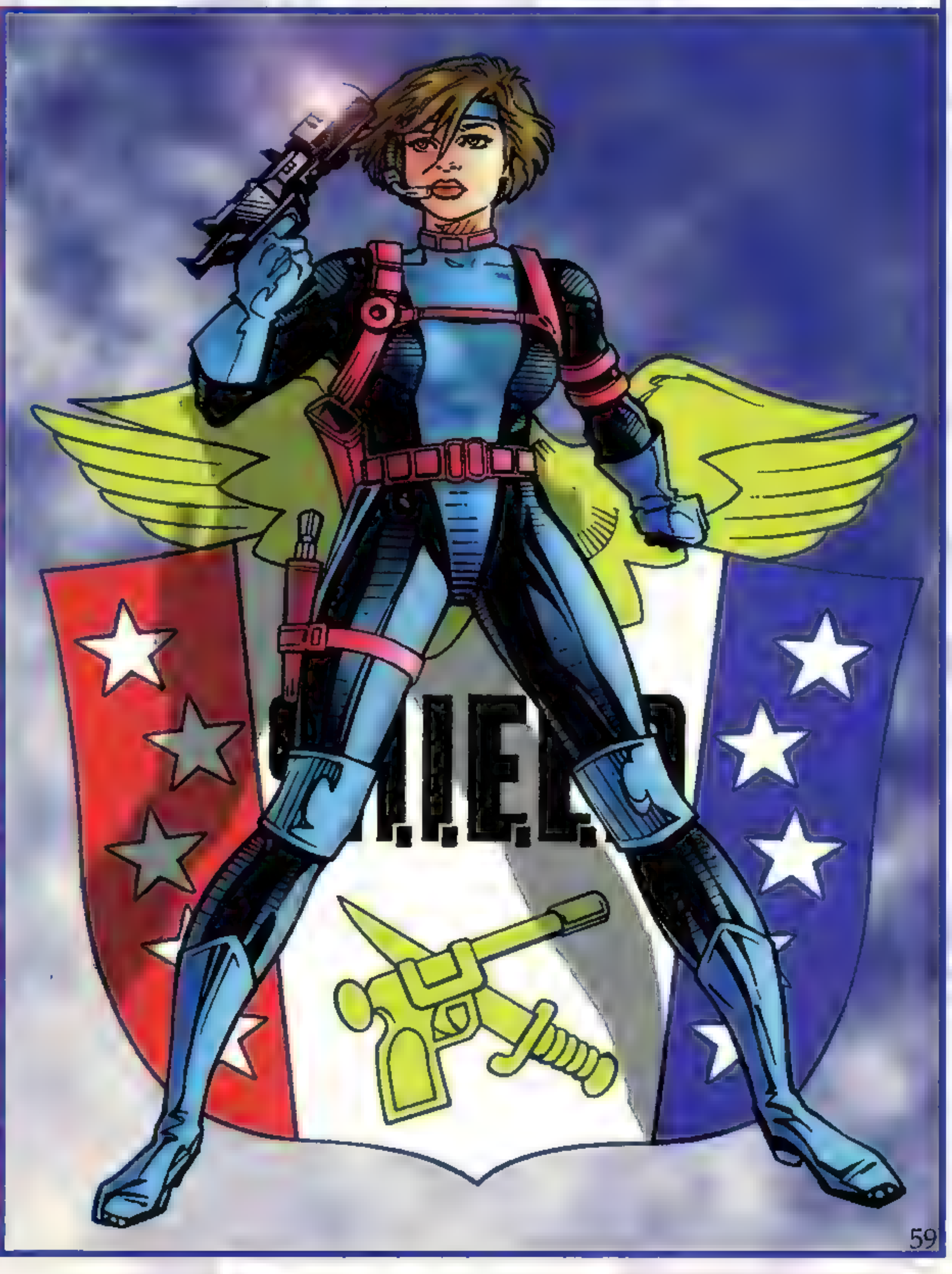
# SERVING S.H.I.E.L.D. WITH PRYDE

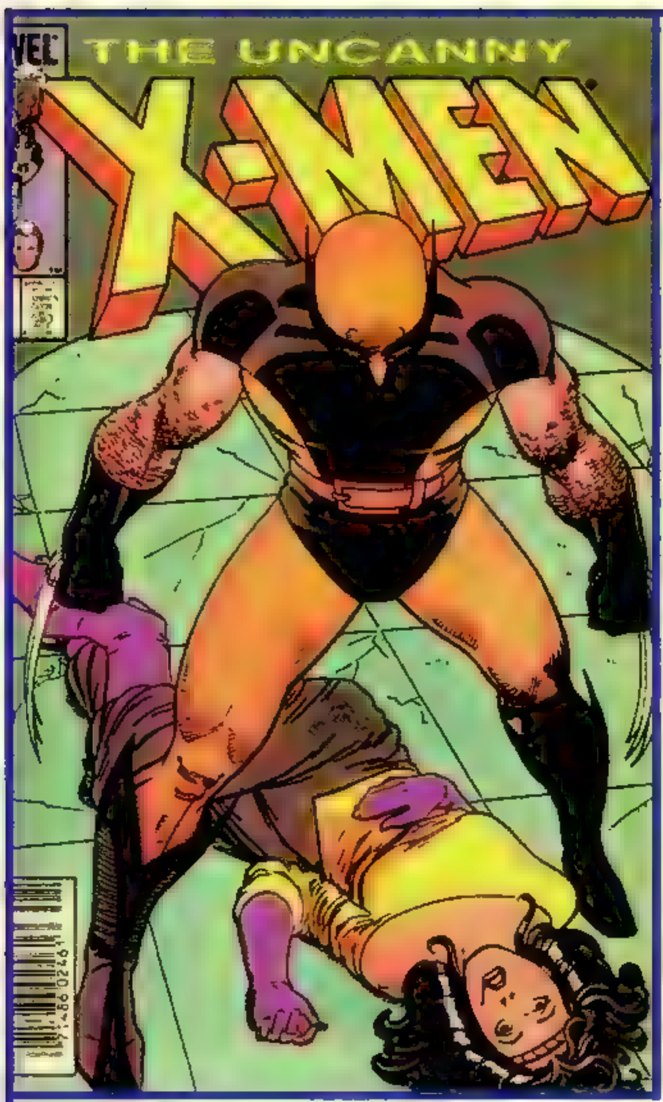
What do a mutant, a feral berserker, an insane computer and the top secret government agency, S.H.I.E.L.D., have in common? Normally not much (thank goodness), but in the new limited series KITTY PRYDE: AGENT OF S.H.I.E.L.D., their lives and computer software come crashing together. Kitty Pryde, the young mutant who captured the attention of every X-MEN reader when she first phased onto the scene in UNCANNY X-MEN #129, has found herself wrapped up in a big mystery, and the answers aren't making themselves readily available.

"Something has infected the S.H.I.E.L.D. helicarrier computer system," series editor Bobbie Chase tells us. "It's making it do strange and crazy things. Like ruining the laundry, and swerving all over the city. It's playing really terrible music all the time and the only voice it will supposedly respond to belongs to someone who isn't even on the helicarrier. It's Kitty Pryde's. So G.W. Bridge, S.H.I.E.L.D.'s current head honcho, not being a great fan of the X-Men, bites the bullet and takes off for Muir Island to find Kitty and see if that miserable little wretch of a mutant will come aboard the helicarrier and fix the computer."

Because she is the only person to whom the computer will allow access and because she is an expert in the field of computers, S.H.I.E.L.D. has decided to extend (much to the chagrin of G.W. Bridge) the opportunity for her to become part of a special internship on board the helicarrier.

But how did Kitty, better known as Shadowcat, get to this point in her life? When she was thirteen and began experiencing severe headaches, she never could have guessed that they were just the precursor to the manifestation of her mutant phasing powers and that she would soon phase her way into the world's premiere mutant super team, The X-Men. She had a difficult time acclimating to the team at first and the age difference between her and the other






members was a difficult obstacle. However, she found a confidant in Ororo Munroe, a.k.a. Storm, and was soon also taken under the unlikely wing of Wolverine, who taught her how to defend herself physically and prepared her to deal with a world that would soon come to fear and hate her.

Learning how to cope with her new life as an X-Man wasn't Kitty's only problem. She also had a difficult time deciding on a code name to use. First, she called herself Sprite (the name was the least of her worries—take a look at that costume!). After that she used the alias Ariel. Two names and two wardrobe improvements later, she settled on the much cooler nomenclature Shadowcat.

Kitty eventually moved on from the X-Men and joined the European team Excalibur. She has enjoyed a long tenure with that team (she was one of its founding members), but her stay with Excalibur looks as if it may quickly be coming to an end. S.H.I.E.L.D. has pulled away from Muir with orders for Kitty to meet them in the Big Apple, and Kitty has accepted.

Kitty arrives in New York and immediately goes to changing booth #12 of a G.O.P. Jeans Outlet (as she was told to do by S.H.I.E.L.D.), which turns out to be an elevator that takes her straight to the top of the building and to a secret S.H.I.E.L.D. headquarters.

"Too often recently, S.H.I.E.L.D. has become more of a military force and less like the super spy organization it used to be." Writer Larry Hama tells us, "Back when Jim Steranko was doing the old NICK FURY, AGENT OF S.H.I.E.L.D. series it was full of James Bond-like stuff. There were corvettes that would transform into flying cars; Nick would go into a certain barber shop and sit down for a shave and the whole chair would go down into the floor and take him into a secret base. This stuff was great and I'm trying to incorporate it back into S.H.I.E.L.D."

Larry also adds, "I could have done a regular spy story, since the series involves S.H.I.E.L.D. and all, but I wanted to use Kitty's computer savvy in the story. That used to be a focus point of the character, one of her defining traits, and I think it's been put on the back burner. With computers being as prominent as they are today, it seemed like as good a time as any to return to that aspect of the character. I think the secret agent thing would have worked, but just having her join S.H.I.E.L.D. would have seemed a little farfetched with her being so young."

Being young isn't necessarily a bad thing. It's that same youth that has endeared her to many X-Book readers.

Bobbie Chase goes even further with this point, "She is youth. She sees things from a fresh perspective. She still has a sense of fun. I mean, she's got a pet dragon. She's not old and jaded like a lot of her compatriots have become. She's more willing to do things like what happens in this series—like take off for an adventure and just say, 'okay, I'll take a break from Excalibur.' She's sort of deferring the whole college thing and doesn't want to make a big life decision, so she says, 'Oh, well, I'm game for some new training.'

"She is a character younger readers can more easily identify with, because they have to deal with the same kinds of problems on a daily basis." (Except most high schoolers don't have to worry about whether or not the Juggernaut's gonna come to town to beat their heads in.)

Does this include problems of the heart that teenagers are wont to experience? You better believe it does! First off, it must be mentioned that Kitty hasn't been the luckiest of people when it comes to love. For quite some time she was in love with fellow X-Man Peter Rasputin, a.k.a. Colossus, despite a big age difference (she was only thirteen and he was over seventeen—isn't there a law against this sort of thing?). Well, he ended up going to some alien battle world during the SECRET WARS and fell in love with an alien babe. Needless to say, they broke up and Kitty stayed without a significant other until the arrival of Pete Wisdom.

Once again, Kitty had fallen for an older man (this time, she's seventeen and Wisdom is about thirty). Despite their vast differences, both of them were really happy with each other, until recently.

"She's actually been having problems with Pete Wisdom in Excalibur," says Bobbie. "She's getting fed up with her relationship. He's a bit of an

old crusty sod and she's getting a little fed up with his attitude. I think she's in the mood for something new when she takes off and pretty much tells him to stick it."

Now add to the mix one S.H.I.E.L.D. special intern, Rigby Fallon. With the good looks of Leonardo DiCaprio, the smarts of Stephen Hawking and the charm of Remy LeBeau, he's all a woman could want.

"He also happens to be a computer geek just like Kitty Pryde!" says Bobbie Chase. "It's not exactly love at first sight but... Well, it's not like she's going to forget Pete, but she's definitely interested and, yeah, things start to happen."

So, Kitty might be on the road to new romance, but that road is going to have to take a slight detour until the problem of the helicarrier computer is sorted out. Once the helicarrier was airborne and things seemed under control, the culprit of the computer infestation revealed itself to be Ogun. How is it possible that Ogun took over the computer system?

"Well, he's already a spirit and he recently possessed Lady Deathstrike (a cyborg from the pages of WOLVERINE) so Ogun's moving up the ladder," Bobbie tells us. "Now he's taken over this mildly sentient computer system on board the helicarrier."

"Besides playing off Kitty's computer expertise I also wanted to throw in a race against time sort of aspect. It's kind of like (the movie) 'Speed.'" Larry says. "There's this giant helicarrier careening out of control through the skies of New York City and it's up to Kitty to try and stop it before it destroys everything."

And, of course, the arrival of Ogun on the scene brings everyone's favorite feral berserker into the fray. Wolverine shows up when Ogun sends a false message to him in order to lure him out so he can destroy Wolverine once and for all (although crashing the helicarrier into him does seem a little like overkill, though). Once again, it seems, Kitty and Wolverine are teamed up against Logan's old mentor.

Bobbie Chase tells us, "In the KITTY PRYDE AND WOLVERINE limited series, written by Chris Claremont and penciled by Al Milgrom, the story was about Kitty going to Japan and meeting Wolverine's old sensei Ogun and learning about the martial arts and developing her abilities. So this is really a test of those abilities she picked up the last time they met."

Since those pages, Ogun has been obsessed with young Katherine Pryde. In her first limited series, Kitty's father was in trouble with the Japanese mob, which Ogun was linked to. Kitty went to Japan in order to help her father and Ogun saw her as something he could use against his former student and now arch-nemesis, Logan. He possessed Kitty and tutored her in the ways of the ninja. Oddly though, Ogun thought of Kitty as a daughter and then used her possessed body to battle Wolverine, knowing that Logan would not attack her. However, Wolverine was able to break Ogun's control of her and he seemingly killed his former sensei in the process.

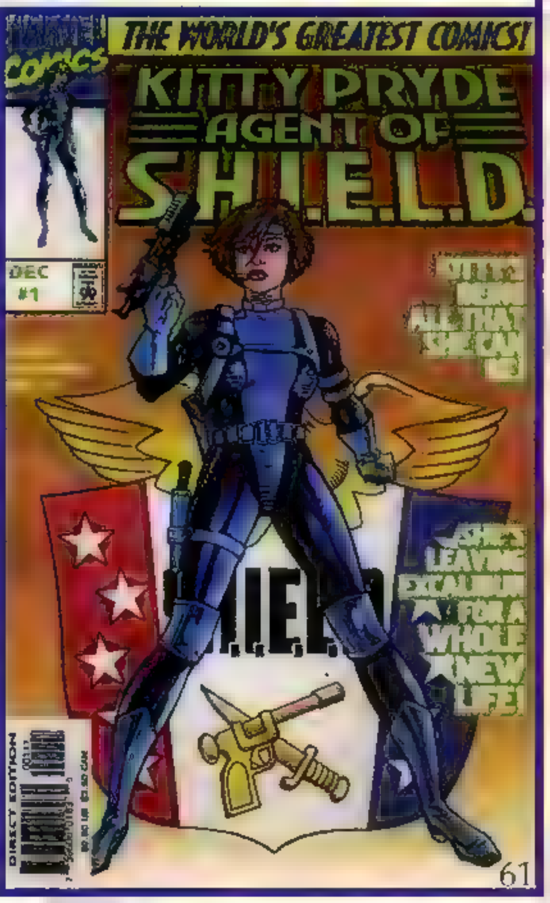
Ogun's power was so great, though, that he did not die; instead he became the roving spirit he is today. Ogun's honor code dictates that he should once again have Kitty as his. It was an insult that Kitty was taken from him, and the insult was made greater because she was taken by his student, proving the student had indeed surpassed the master.

But, this time, as the battle escalates, Ogun possesses Rigby and Kitty has to enter the computer and face Ogun on his own terms in order to free Rigby from his control. Can Kitty defeat Ogun by herself? Has the pupil's student learned enough to defeat the sensei?

Larry tells us, "It's not a matter of defeating the villain. Defeating a villain is the easy part. There's not much story in just beating up the bad guy. Anyone can beat up the bad guy, but getting him to change his mind—his perspective—that's the hard part. I think what's interesting about this story is that Ogun comes away from it changed."

But whether he's changed for the better or the worse? That remains to be seen.

***-Dan Hosek (who looks slightly better in that Sprite costume than Kitty did)***



# 1975 PART 3:

## OF MEN AND THE MAN-THING

Looking back over Marvel history, I am sometimes surprised at how short some of the great periods of the classic series truly were. Many of the best stories Steve Gerber wrote for MAN-THING were cover-dated 1975, the year this astonishing series was canceled.

The Man-Thing himself was a human being, Ted Sallis, transformed into a nearly mindless creature who stood guard over a swamp that housed "the nexus of all realities," a place where virtually anything could happen. Gerber's stories were not about the Man-Thing himself but about the personalities of the many people who crossed his path.

In this year we met Dr. Maura Spinner, a modern woman who was captured by Captain Jebediah Fate, who commanded a flying pirate ship displaced from its proper time. Being caught up in these weird circumstances released buried sides of Dr. Spinner's character; first, she became the pirate queen Maura Hawke, venting a far more aggressive side of her personality than modern society would allow. But finally she discovered the opposite side of her psyche, her capacity for love, through the self-sacrifice of a grotesque satyr named Khordes, who was nonetheless deeply in love with her.

Maura's fantastic adventure was followed by Gerber's most poetic and atmospheric MAN-THING tale, "A Candle for Sainte-Cloud," about a bohemian young woman living in 1970s New York who encounters Ted Sallis in a brief moment of happy respite from the life's path that will lead him to his horrible transformation.

Meanwhile, in the GIANT-SIZE MAN-THING series, Gerber and artist Alfredo Alcala conjured an adventure that took the readers and the young Earth-born sorceress Jennifer Kale to the otherdimensional world of her young swordsman friend, Korrek. It was a tale of their coming of age: Korrek by avenging the death of his father, and Kale by witnessing the death of her beloved mentor, the eccentric wizard Dakimh the Enchanter.

The next issue of GIANT-SIZE MAN-THING was a landmark story in its time, "The Kid's Night Out," in which a high school girl, Alice, investigates the demise of a schoolmate named Edmund, a social outcast, and discovers that virtually his entire community, through its insensitivity, shares responsibility for his despair and death.

The series saved one of its strangest surprises for the final issue, #22, which opened with Steve Gerber himself resigning as writer of MAN-THING. It turned out that Dakimh the Enchanter, who from now on would admit only to being "technically dead," had been conveying the stories that Gerber would write down for publication. In the course of wrapping up the series, Gerber found himself, through occult means, temporarily merging with the Man-Thing, experiencing the empathic creature's sensations, in an apt metaphor for the link between the writer and his subject. The intensity of vicariously experiencing the feelings of the characters had proved emotionally exhausting, and so Gerber felt he had to leave for the sake of his own well-being.

So, those of you Vertigo readers who were fascinated by the last issue Grant Morrison wrote of ANIMAL-MAN, in which Animal-Man met Morrison, be advised that Steve Gerber had done a similar tale nearly two decades before. Indeed, Gerber's MAN-THING really was a forerunner of the psychologically intense supernatural fantasy series that would proliferate in comics in the 1980s and 1990s.

Gerber wrote super hero

stories as well, but put his own distinctive stamp on them. For example, he took over a conventional super hero team book, THE DEFENDERS, and rapidly transformed it into an increasingly unconventional one. Take, for example, his new team of villains for the book, the Headmen. Dr. Arthur Nagan's human head had been transplanted onto a powerful gorilla's body. Dr. Jerold Morgan had used a gas that shrunk his skeleton but not his skin, which now drooped grotesquely over his reduced frame. Their partner, Chondu the Mystic, was a sorcerer who

looked comparatively normal—for now. Longtime comics readers might have realized that each of these three characters had starred in science fiction stories Marvel had published before the new era of super hero series, and all three stories had recently been republished in a single issue of Marvel's reprint series, WEIRD WONDER TALES.

Perhaps the strangest character Gerber introduced during his DEFENDERS run, however, was the infamous Elf with a Gun. The Elf first turned up in DEFENDERS #25, in which he shot Tom and Linda Pritchitt, two characters making their first—and last—appearance in a Marvel story. The Elf would continue making these inexplicable appearances throughout Gerber's DEFENDERS stint, shooting people with no apparent rhyme or reason.

Years after Gerber left DEFENDERS, Ralph Macchio had the Elf run over by a truck in Marvel's second KISS book, which he wrote; still later, J. M. DeMatteis tried to explain the elf as a messenger trying to alert the Defenders of a threat to the world. But I suspect that, if you really have a feel for Gerber's work, then you understand that there is no explanation for the Elf, and probably no way to dispose of him. The Elf was an expression of Gerber's macabre sense of humor and his liking for the surreal. If the Elf has any deeper meaning, then he is a symbol of the absurdity and random violence of existence, both of which are themes throughout Gerber's work.

In issue #5 of GIANT-SIZE DEFENDERS we saw as the freedom fighters of an alternate future, the Guardians of the Galaxy, traveled back to the Defenders' time, where they met Guardians leader Vance Astro's younger self, the boy known as Vance Astrovik. Later Marvel stories would show how the Vance of the present day would reach a "point of divergence" between two alternate timelines. In one alternate timeline he would grow up to become Vance Astro of the Guardians. But in "mainstream" reality Vance would take a different path, in which he is now known as the teenage super hero Justice, a member of the New Warriors.

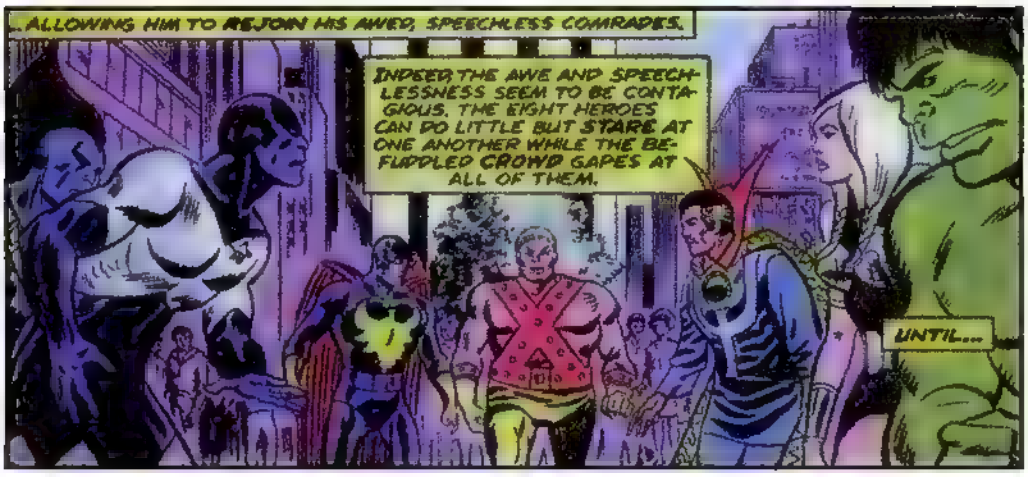
The Defenders team accompanied the Guardians of the Galaxy to their far future time, where they helped the Guardians win their first major victory in overthrowing the alien Badoon, who had conquered the Earth of that time. During this storyline Gerber gave the readers a grand overview of this alternate future, establishing the futures of DEATHLOK and KILLRAVEN series as part of the same timeline as that of GUARDIANS.

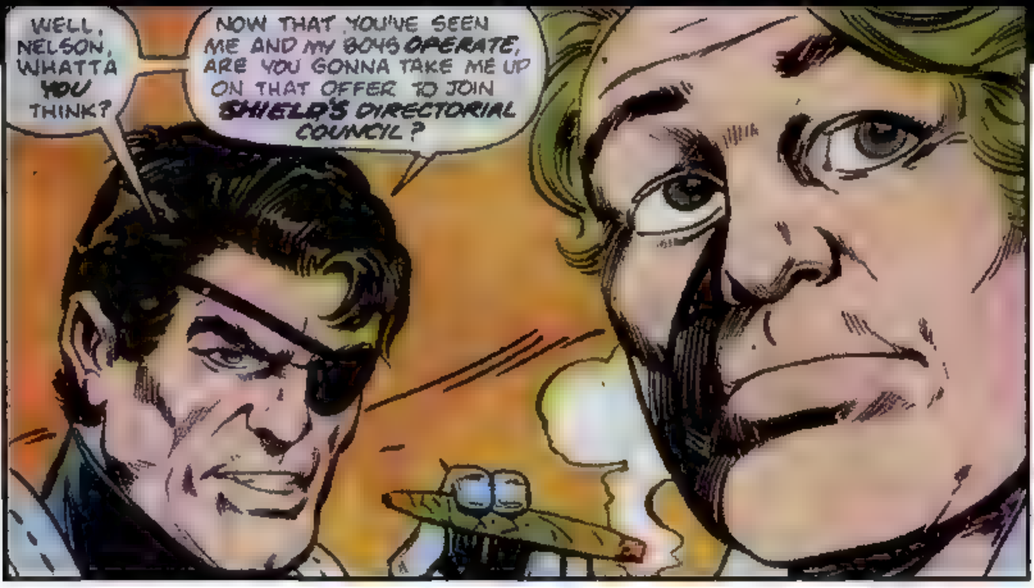
It was also in this multi-parter that the Guardians first encountered Starhawk, an enigmatic costumed man with vast cosmic powers. Readers also met Aleta, Starhawk's equally mysterious mate, who cared for his children. It would remain for the GUARDIANS' own forthcoming series to reveal that Starhawk and Aleta had somehow fused into a single being, and only one of them could manifest himself or herself in the physical world at one time. This was a variation on the situation in which Captain Mar-Vell and Rick Jones had found themselves. In this case Gerber appeared to be devising a symbol for the duality of male and female sides of the same being, or perhaps for the union of two people in love; Aleta and Starhawk had indeed joined both emotionally and physically.

The final major character Steve Gerber introduced into THE DEFENDERS series this year was Korvac, a cyborg from the future who, along with various alien villains, was pitted against Daredevil and the Defenders in GIANT-SIZE DEFENDERS #3. This was yet another of the diabolical games played by the alien Grandmaster, whom Daredevil finally bested by daring him to bet "heads" or "tails" on a coin toss! Years later writer Jim Shooter would remake Korvac into one of the Avengers' most formidable adversaries, Michael, "the Enemy," who wielded enough cosmic power to reshape the cosmos. Korvac's various cohorts would return in the GUARDIANS' 1990s series as the "Minions of Menace."

Compared to the creative fireworks in the Gerber titles, many of Marvel's core books seemed relatively mundane. But there was still a good deal worth noting in these books in 1975.

For example, if current DAREDEVIL readers think that Foggy Nelson's sister, Candace, is a new character, they are mistaken: Candace was a frequent presence in 1975's DAREDEVIL issues. But there was even bigger news in Foggy's life that year: rather inexplicably, Nick Fury offered to make him an agent of S.H.I.E.L.D.!






Foggy's career as a S.H.I.E.L.D. agent never got off the ground, but Fury and his agents stuck around for four memorable issues of DAREDEVIL, #120-123, written by Tony Isabella, now known to comics fans as a columnist for Comic Buyer's Guide. Fury and S.H.I.E.L.D. had lost their own series, but they remained a continual presence as guest stars in different Marvel series, as did their opposite number, the subversive organization Hydra.

During the last several months of 1975 DAREDEVIL introduced three new characters of note. Foggy Nelson had become New York City's District Attorney, which, admittedly, was somewhat more credible than his being a S.H.I.E.L.D. agent, but he was soon to be unseated by a new candidate, Blake Tower, first seen in issue #124.

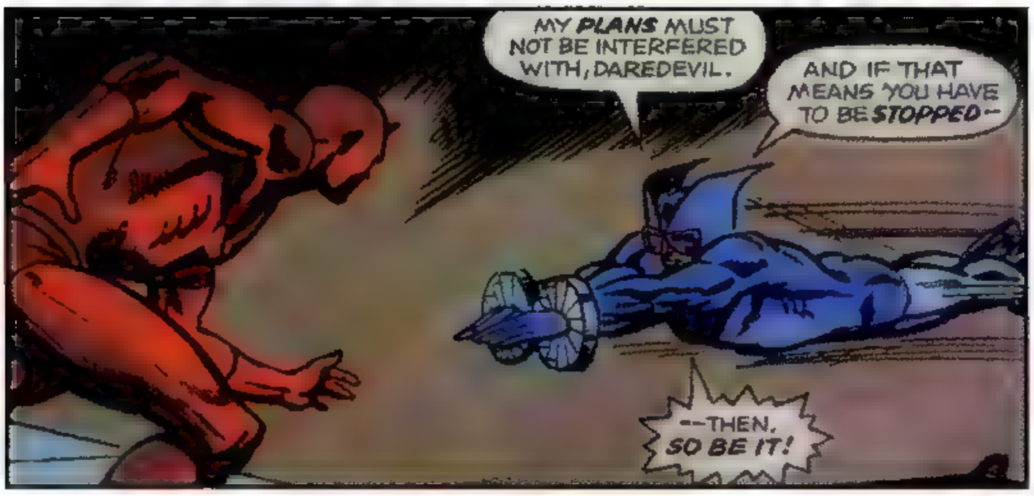
Two issues later ex-football player Brock Jones acquired a costume whose jets propelled him through the air as the Torpedo. We would later learn that this costume had been created by the alien Dire Wraiths, the villains of a future Marvel series, ROM.

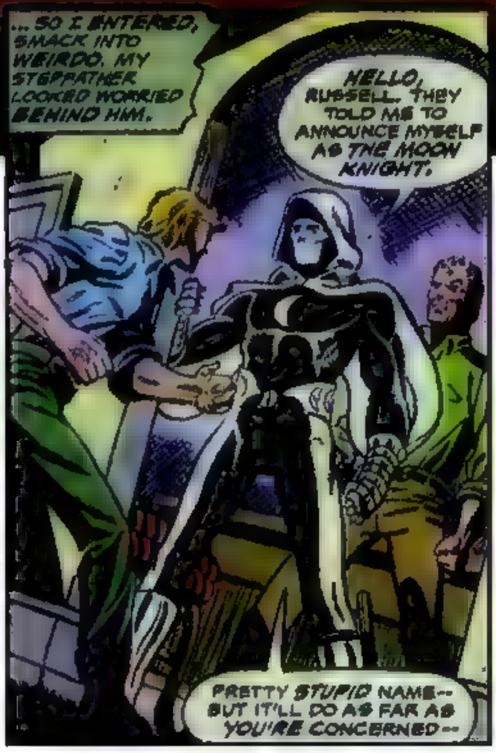
In that same issue, #126, readers first met the spoiled young heiress Heather Glenn, destined to become Matt Murdock's girlfriend—and a source of major personal problems for him.

Although Susan Richards had been reconciled with her husband Reed after their recent estrangement, she still had not rejoined the Fantastic Four as 1975 began. Hence, the Inhuman Medusa was still acting as her substitute when the Fantastic Four once again faced off against their perennial archenemy, Doctor Doom. This time Doom had forced the Silver Surfer to side with him, claiming to be married to the Surfer's beloved from his homeworld, Shalla Bal! Len Wein started the story, which built towards the revelation that Doom's supposed wife was really an Earthwoman named Helena, who, by a staggeringly unlikely coincidence, looked exactly like Shalla Bal. But Roy Thomas finished the story line, adding a new twist: Helena was indeed the amnesiac Shalla Bal, whom the Surfer's own archfoe, Mephisto, had transported to Earth! (And if we are to believe recent revelations in SILVER SURFER, this Shalla Bal was a fake, and so Mephisto too was deceived!)

Sue returned to the F.F. in time for a complex story line concocted by Roy Thomas that involved an interdimensional war fomented by the Avengers' Conan-like adversary, Arkon the Imperion.

Once again drawing on his love of the comics of past decades, Roy Thomas reintroduced the 1950s super hero Marvel Boy in FANTASTIC FOUR #164. Marvel Boy's father, a pioneer of space travel decades before NASA existed, had raised him amidst the advanced civilization inhabiting the planet Uranus! Marvel Boy later fought crime on Earth using the energy powers of his Uranian wristbands. Upon discovering the Uranians wiped out by a mysterious disaster, Marvel Boy went insane. Returning to Earth as an adult calling himself the Crusader, he battled the Fantastic Four until his wristbands overloaded and finally disintegrated him. The wristbands, though, later fell into the hands of Wendell Vaughn, who used them in his role as Quasar, protector of the universe.






The most significant event in FANTASTIC FOUR that year, though, took place in GIANT-SIZE FANTASTIC FOUR #4, in which the F.F. encountered a teenage mutant named Jamie Madrox, who could generate duplicates of himself. At the story's end, the F.F. put Jamie in touch with Professor Charles Xavier, setting him on the path that would make him a member of X-Factor years later under the name of Multiple Man.

The Thing did not have a memorable year in MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE, but one issue may be of interest to Marvel trivia aficionados. Issue #11 was a conclusion to the short-lived GOLEM series in STRANGE TALES #174-177, first written by Len Wein. This was an unusual experiment, inasmuch as most comics heroes up till now were presumed to be Protestant. The golem, though, is a creature of Jewish legend: an artificially created being that comes to life to battle the enemies of the Jewish people. A golem had already appeared in HULK #134 in 1970; after the demise of the GOLEM series in STRANGE TALES, a World War II golem would be introduced in the pages of THE INVADERS.

THE INCREDIBLE HULK remained as ever entertaining throughout 1975 but not innovative. The only landmark event, and this was a minor one, was the introduction of Glorian, a golden-skinned humanoid whom the alien Shaper of Worlds was teaching to reshape reality. Glorian, it turned out, proved to be Thomas Gideon, the son of the Fantastic Four's former foe, the billionaire Gregory Gideon; as for the Shaper, he would eventually be revealed to be a Cosmic Cube that had achieved sentience!

The War of the Super-Villains in IRON MAN led to the unmasking of its instigator, the Black Lama, as King Jerald, an otherdimensional counterpart of then-President Gerald Ford. The nasty old Black Lama turned out to be a nice guy after all, who needed Iron Man's help to protect him and his daughter Princess Susan (based on President Ford's daughter Susan) from their enemy Baron Rockler (based on Ford's political cohort Nelson Rockefeller, who actually wasn't a bad guy). Let's just say this wasn't one of the Golden Avenger's golden moments.

More interesting is the fact that issue #72 was set at the San Diego Comic Convention, which was then only a few years old! This was the first appearance of that new institution, the comic book convention, in a Marvel comic.

For the Asgardian fans, to save the life of Thor's former beloved, nurse Jane Foster, his current true love, the goddess Sif, physically merged with her! As a result, Jane Foster, showing new courage and spirit (either a result of having absorbed Sif or of reflecting 1970s feminism), once again became the leading lady in THOR.

And there was so much more in 1975! Having left the X-Men, the Angel and Iceman joined with Hercules, the Black Widow, and the original Ghost Rider to form Marvel's first California-based super-team in THE CHAMPIONS. The monster hunter Ulysses Bloodstone debuted in MARVEL PRESENTS, and a modern man found himself in a prehistoric world in the Bermuda Triangle—no, not the Savage Land—in SKULL THE SLAYER. Conan's female counterpart, Red Sonja, now in her trademark iron bikini, received her own solo series in MARVEL FEATURE.

Perhaps the most prolific writer Marvel had, Doug Moench, was busy on WEREWOLF BY NIGHT, and introduced a new character in issue #32, Moon Knight, who would soon gain a series of his own. But Moench's greatest work of this period was his collaboration with the highly talented artist Paul Gulacy on MASTER OF KUNG FU, which they transformed into a series of gritty, atmospheric, exciting thrillers in the James Bond tradition. In 1975 alone they introduced classic characters like Shang-Chi's lover Leiko Wu; his rival, Shen Kuei, alias Cat; Cat's own lover, Juliette; the villains Carlton Velcro and Mordillo, and the latter's toy-like robot companion, Brynocki.

And in the closing pages of the final two issues of GIANT-SIZE MAN-THING, by popular demand, came the first solo adventures of the scene-stealing character from MAN-THING, Howard the Duck. It seemed that after he tumbled from sight in MAN-THING #1, Howard fell through an interdimensional void and landed in Cleveland, long, long before its recent urban renaissance. Steve Gerber, of course, was the writer, teamed up with the brilliant artistry of Frank Brunner. These first two stories pitted Howard against parodies of horror film menaces: the enormous Garko the Man-Frog and the vampiric Bessie the Hellcow.

But there were much bigger things in store for Howard. As we shall see, in 1976 America is a country where any man, woman, or duck can become president!

**—Peter Sanderson**

Showcasing the multitalented people who've made the House of Ideas one groovy pad, it's...

# MARVEL'S UNSUNG HEROES

**Real Name:**
Tom Tataranowicz

**Date of Birth:**
9/22/52

**Occupation:**
Supervising Producer/Director at Marvel Films

**First Appeared in Marvel TV Universe:**
as Supervising Producer/ Director of 'Fantastic Four' and 'Iron Man', Marvel Action Hour——season II

**Base of Operations:**
Santa Monica, California

**Dual Identity:**
Fisherman; former hippie philosopher of the imponderable ridiculousness of life; demanding, infuriating control freak from hell

**Known Confidants:**
Debbie Zak (wife), Peggy Becker (V.P. Animation Production, Sony Animation), Jim O'Brien (friend), Greg Johnson (Story Editor)

**Major Enemies:**
Any form of bigotry, mega-hit movies that don't have good stories, bad cartoons

**Hero Status Verification:**
Has worked on 104 Marvel-related animated episodes

**Do you remember what sparked your interest in the broadcasting industry?**

I've always loved film. When I was five a movie called "Seventh Voyage of Sinbad" changed my life. The reason I'm sitting in this chair is because of that film. To this day, I have the poster on my office wall because it keeps me true to my task. In twenty years I'd like someone to be sitting here saying, "We're going to make a good cartoon because while I was growing up I really liked the way he did Fantastic Four and the Hulk."

**Are you a big comic book fan?**

Definitely. Lately I haven't been reading as much, but when I was younger I really enjoyed AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, FANTASTIC FOUR, and my favorites were DAREDEVIL and the Jack Kirby THORs.

**Did you draw as a youngster?**

Yes. I'd usually see a movie and then try drawing it as a comic book. Curiously enough, I would then credit myself as the director and producer, even though I didn't really know what those titles meant. I guess it was some sort of pop culture kismet.

**How did you break into the industry?**

In college I read a book called "The Art of Walt Disney." After that I figured I'd go to California and teach Disney how to draw again but they didn't really see it that way. Frankly, they had all the help they needed, thank you, so I took other jobs in the meantime. Later, a friend of mine saw an ad in VARIETY saying that Ralph Bakshi was hiring for "The Lord of the Rings." I had been working on my drawing since being turned down at Disney and got hired. I've been lucky enough to work with a lot of my childhood obsessions like Frank Frazetta ever since.

**Is there one particular episode you're especially proud of?**

I'm very proud of the episode of the Fantastic Four called "And a Blind Man Shall Lead Them" guest-starring Daredevil. It's an adaptation of a Lee/Kirby classic and I thought everything came together very well on that show. Also, I enjoyed working on the "Biker Mice From Mars" series and am extremely proud of the level of creativity and writing we maintained. It really captured the spirit and dynamics of the comic. That wasn't a direct Marvel project but it did run as a Marvel series and involved some key Marvel people.

**What's a typical day in the life of a supervising producer like?**

I usually begin the day in the office reading scripts at about 7 am. Then once 9 am comes around I'm pretty much putting out fires for the day: assigning artists work, personnel concerns, schedules, arranging animation facilities, formulating concepts and titles for the shows, and also working with my Producer and Director to make sure they receive from me what they need to do their work. At lunch I usually go over more creative items like models or more scripts. Then it's back to putting out fires. Finally, from 5 until 7 pm I go back to working on the creative aspects some more.

**What's the secret to your success?**

Mostly hard work, dedication, and focus. But despite all that, it's important to remember that at the other end there is an audience that all this matters a great deal to and you have an obligation to them. Also, if you're a leader you have to listen. Everyone deserves to be heard.

**Which Marvel comic would you most like to make an animated series out of?**

THE MIGHTY THOR because it has an epic scale which lends itself to visuals unlike anything anyone's seen on TV. Also, Thor embodies a sense of honor and integrity that seems to be lacking in today's world.

**How do you ensure your series relate to both young viewers and the older established audience?**

Mostly by staying true to the spirit of the comics. Even when you do a new story it isn't a departure from the comics but something that could possibly have happened. Another important rule is to never write down to your audience. Viewers will reach for something if it's a little more sophisticated. But at the same time, you have to be clear.

**When you're looking to hire people to work with, what qualities must candidates possess?**

Outside of artistic skill, I look for enthusiasm. It's important to see that people want to be a part of something good. Sometimes, even if a person isn't quite there yet, you can tell that they're willing to work at it and get there with a little guidance.

**Who are some of your heroes?**

Carl Sagan (philosopher, astronomer, author), Ray Harryhausen (Special Effects Director & Producer of "Seventh Voyage of Sinbad" among others), Hal Foster (I have 30+ PRINCE VALIANT originals), John Buscema and Russ Manning (comic artists), and Rocky Colavito (baseball player).

—Robert Piotrowski

NOW YOU CAN DO
ALL THE THINGS
YOU'D DO IN A
REAL SAMURAI
SWORD FIGHT,
LIKE HIGHTAIL IT
FOR THE WOODS
AND HIDE
BEHIND A TREE,
FOR EXAMPLE.
•FIGHT IN RIVERS,
FORESTS, TEMPLES
•MASTER SWORDPLAY
•BLOODY DEATH BLOWS
•NO TIME LIMIT
•NO LIFE BAR
•REAL ENOUGH FOR YOU?
BUSHIDO BLADE™
SQUARESOFT
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AGES 13+
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
PlayStation
NEVER UNDERESTIMATE
THE POWER OF PLAYSTATION™
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# MARVEL HEROES

## ON SALE JANUARY 7

### DAREDEVIL NO. 373

JOE KELLY/RICHIE ACOSTA

WHO - OR WHAT - ARE THE "3"? DAREDEVIL MOVES CLOSER TO THE ANSWER, ONLY TO DISCOVER THAT FOGGY'S SISTER, CANDACE, HAS TURNED UP MISSING! COULD THE 3 POSSIBLY HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT? OR IS THERE SOMEONE WITH A MORE SINISTER HAND INVOLVED? ........................................1.99

### FANTASTIC FOUR NO. 3

SCOTT LOBDELL/ALAN DAVIS/MARK FARMER

HAPPY NEW YEAR, REED RICHARDS, NOW DIE! IT'S NEW YEAR'S EVE, AND ALL OF THE WORLD IS CELEBRATING, EXCEPT FOR **RED GHOST AND HIS SUPER APES!** AND AS MR. FANTASTIC FIGHTS FOR HIS LIFE, THE **SILVER SURFER** SENSES A FORCE THAT COULD THREATEN THE ENTIRE WORLD - A THREAT THAT ALREADY HAS THE **MOLE MAN** ON THE RUN! ........................................1.99

### KA-ZAR NO. 11

MARK WAID/ANDY KUBERT/JESSE DELPERDANG

"URBAN JUNGLE" PART 4 OF 4

**THE CONCLUDING CHAPTER OF KA-ZAR'S FIRST MAJOR STORY ARC!** IT'S THE FINAL BATTLE AGAINST **THANOS!** AND EVEN IF THE EARTH LIVES, HOW CAN THE SAVAGE LAND SURVIVE? ........................1.99

### MOON KNIGHT NO. 3 (OF 4)

DOUG MOENCH/TOMMY LEE EDWARDS/ROBERT CAMPANELLA

THE PENULTIMATE CHAPTER OF THE "RESURRECTION WAR," AS MOON KNIGHT'S QUEST FOR THE TRUTH BEHIND HIS "DEATH" LEADS HIM TO A BRUTAL CONFRONTATION WITH HIS OPPOSITE NUMBER: THE MENACING **BLACK SPECTRE!** AND EVEN IF THE SILVER-AND-BLACK AVENGER CAN SURVIVE THAT GRUDGE MATCH, THE INSANE DREAM DEMON **MORPHEUS** IS WAITING IN THE WINGS FOR HIS OWN REVENGE! ..............2.50

## ON SALE JANUARY 14

### ALPHA FLIGHT NO. 8

STEVEN T. SEAGLE/SCOTT CLARK/CHRIS CARLSON

**DEPARTMENT H OPENS THE X-FILES-THE WEAPON X FILES, THAT IS!** BUT WHOSE MEMORIES OF THE MAN CALLED **LOGAN** AND CODE-NAMED **WOLVERINE** ARE ACCURATE? IT'S A SHOCKER THAT LEADS INTO "NORTH & SOUTH", NEXT MONTH'S ALPHA FLIGHT/UNCANNY X-MEN CROSSOVER! ........................................1.99

### GHOST RIDER NO. 94

IVAN VELEZ JR./JAVIER SALTERES/MARK TEXIERA

**FINAL FLAMIN' ISSUE!** WITH BLACKHEART DEPOSED, THE GHOST RIDER IS NOW LORD OF THE NETHAR REALM! WHAT DOES HE INTEND TO DO WITH HIS POWER? AND WILL THE OTHER DARK LORDS - LIKE **BELASCO, PLUTO** AND **HELA** - ALLOW HIM TO KEEP IT? DON'T MISS THE LAST ISSUE OF GHOST RIDER AS THE FATE OF THE SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE IS REVEALED! ........................................1.99

### IRON MAN NO. 2

KURT BUSIEK/SEAN CHEN/ERIC J. CANNON

**TONY STARK** IS INVITED TO SWITZERLAND TO HELP A BEAUTIFUL COUNTESS WITH SOME "ACCOUNTING PROBLEMS" AT HER MANUFACTURING PLANT, BUT SOON DISCOVERS SHE REALLY NEEDS THE SERVICES OF **IRON MAN!** ........................................1.99

## ON SALE JANUARY 14

### JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY NO. 518
STARRING THE BLACK WIDOW

SCOTT LOBDELL/RANDY GREEN/RICK KETCHUM

THE BLACK WIDOW COMES FACE-TO-FACE WITH THE LEADER OF FREEDOMSLIGHT, THE BEAUTIFUL AND DEADLY EBON FLAME! NOW, IF IT WERE JUST ONE AVENGER AGAINST AN ARMY OF ANARCHISTS OUT TO DESTROY AMERICA, THAT'D BE ONE THING BUT THE FURTHER INTO THIS SHE GETS, THE MORE IT BECOMES APPARENT TO NATASHA THAT SHE JUST MIGHT BE JOURNEYING INTO A MYSTERY FROM WHICH SHE MAY NEVER RETURN! ....................1.99

### MARVEL ADVENTURES NO. 12
STARRING THE FANTASTIC FOUR

RALPH MACCHIO/ANDY KUHN/HARRY CANDELARIO

IT'S THE FF VS. THE FF! OUR FABULOUS FOURSOME TAKE ON THE **WIZARD**, THE **TRAPSTER**, **SANDMAN** AND **THUNDRA**-THE **FRIGHTFUL FOUR!** ....................1.50

## ON SALE JANUARY 21

### BRING ON THE BAD GUYS
TRADE PAPERBACK

NEW COVER BY JOHN ROMITA JR.

VARIOUS

**REPRINTING THE CLASSIC COLLECTION SPOTLIGHTING THE VILLAINS YOU LOVE TO HATE!** WITNESS THE GENESIS OF SUCH MALICIOUS MALCONTENTS AS **DOCTOR DOOM**, **MEPHISTO**, THE **GREEN GOBLIN**, **LOKI**, THE **ABOMINATION** AND THE **DREAD DORMAMMU!** ACCOMPANYING THESE MODERN CLASSICS OF EVIL A'BORNING ARE NOTES AND BEHIND-THE-SCENES INFO FROM **STAN "THE MAN" LEE** HIMSELF! ....................24.99

### CAPTAIN AMERICA NO. 3
MARK WAID/RON GARNEY/BOB WIACEK

CAP, STILL ADJUSTING TO HIS HORRIBLE LOSS FROM LAST ISSUE, FIGHTS ON AGAINST THE HATED HORDES OF **HYDRA**, WHO HAVE AN ALL-NEW CHARACTER PULLING THE STRINGS! ....................1.99

### HEROES FOR HIRE NO. 9
JOHN OSTRANDER/PASCUAL FERRY/JAIME MENDOZA

**IT'S THE SEARCH FOR THE PUNISHER! IRON FIST** HAS BEEN HIRED BY A GOVERNMENT AGENCY TO TRACK DOWN AND CAPTURE THE FUGITIVE **FRANK CASTLE**, UNFORTUNATELY, **LUKE CAGE** HAS BEEN HIRED BY A PRIVATE CITIZEN TO MAKE SURE THE NOW-AMNESIAC VIGILANTE IS PROTECTED FROM HIS PURSUERS! ....................1.99

### INCREDIBLE HULK NO. 462
PETER DAVID/ADAM KUBERT/MARK FARMER

A KINDER, GENTLER, **THUNDERBOLT ROSS** HIRES A CRACK LAWYER TO PROVE THAT BRUCE BANNER WAS *NON COMPIS MENTIS* DURING HIS RECENT RUN-INS WITH THE U.S. ARMY (DUE TO THE SHRAPNEL IN HIS HEAD). SO WHY IS HE BEING SO DARN NICE TO THE MAN WHO IS THE HULK? MEANWHILE, BRUCE ENLISTS THE HELP OF **REED RICHARDS** AND **TONY STARK** TO BUILD AN EXOSKELETON FOR THE DISABLED **RICK JONES**. ....................1.99

### THUNDERBOLTS NO. 12
WRAPAROUND COVER BY MARK BAGLEY & VINCE RUSSELL

KURT BUSIEK/MARK BAGLEY/VINCE RUSSELL

IT'S THE CHAOTIC CONCLUSION TO THE THUNDERBOLTS' FIRST STORY ARC, AND PROPELS THEM INTO THEIR SECOND SHOCKING YEAR! IT SEEMS AS THOUGH **CITIZEN V'S** PLAN IS ACTUALLY GOING TO SUCCEED AND THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN PUT THE BRAKES ON IT IS **JOLT!** AND WHEN THE AVENGERS AND THE FANTASTIC FOUR APPEAR, THE STAGE IS SET FOR THE SHOWDOWN ALL OF COMICDOM HAVE BEEN CLAMORING FOR! ....................2.99

## ON SALE JANUARY 21

### UNLIMITED ACCESS NO. 4 (OF 4)

KARL KESEL/PAT OLLIFFE/AL WILLIAMSON

**THE DOUBLE-SIZED FINALE TO THE LATEST AND GREATEST MARVEL AND DC CO-PRODUCTION!** THE MARVEL UNIVERSE OF THE PAST WILL FALL BEFORE THE COMBINED POWER OF **DARKSEID** AND **MAGNETO** UNLESS **ACCESS** AND A CREW OF **ALL-NEW AMALGAMS** (INCLUDING **THOR-EL**, **REDWING**, **JEAN BLACK** AND **CAPTAIN AMERICA JR.**) CAN TURN THE TIDE! .......... 2.99

## ON SALE JANUARY 28

### AVENGERS NO. 2

KURT BUSIEK/GEORGE PEREZ/AL VEY

**IRON KNIGHT! DONAR! YEOMAN AMERICA!** THE MIGHTIEST HEROES IN ALL THE REALM HAVE BANDED TOGETHER AS THE QUEEN'S HONOR GUARD, THE AVENGERS! THE **SCARLET WITCH** HOLDS THE KEY TO THIS STRANGE, ALTERED REALITY TOO BAD SHE'S A PRISONER WITHIN HER MAJESTY'S DUNGEONS! .......... 1.99

### CONAN THE BARBARIAN VS. THE LORD OF THE SPIDERS NO. 1 (OF3)

ROY THOMAS/STEFANO RAFFAELE/RALPH CABRERA

**WRITER ROY THOMAS RETURNS TO THE BRONZE BARBARIAN IN THIS ALL-NEW LIMITED SERIES!** THE CIMMERIAN MUST FIGHT A FOE FROM THE PAST WHEN HE FACES THE RETURN OF **HARPAGUS**, THE VILE VILLAIN WITH THE POWER TO TRANSFORM INTO A GIANT, VENOMOUS SPIDER! LAST SEEN IN THE CLASSIC CONAN THE BARBARIAN #4 (ALSO WRITTEN BY THOMAS), THE ANGRY ARACHNID IS BACK FOR REVENGE! .......... 2.50

### DEADPOOL NO. 14

JOE KELLY/WALTER MCDANIEL/ANIBAL RODRIGUEZ

**THE NEW ONGOING ART TEAM OF WALTER MCDANIEL (KA-ZAR '97) AND ANIBAL RODRIGUEZ JUMP ONBOARD!** AS FALLOUT TUMBLES DOWN FROM LAST ISSUE'S BLOWOUT WITH **T-RAY**, NEW PLOTS BEGIN AS **DEADPOOL** MAKES A DEAL OF A LIFETIME BUT IS IT A DEAL WITH THE DEVIL? .......... 1.99

### ELEKTRA NO. 16

LARRY HAMA/MIKE DEODATO JR./SCOTT KOBLISH

ELEKTRA KNOWS THE **HAND** BROUGHT HER BACK TO LIFE, BUT SHE ALSO KNOWS THEY TOOK SOMETHING FROM HER WHEN THEY DID. SOMETHING THAT'S LEFT A HOLE IN HER SOUL. .......... 1.99

### MARVEL VISION NO. 28

CONTINUING ITS THIRD YEAR OF PUBLICATION, MARVEL VISION CONTINUES TO DELIVER THE DEFINITIVE NEWS REGARDING THE MIGHTY MARVEL UNIVERSE! THIS ISSUE'S FEATURES INCLUDE AN ORIGIN OF THE SPECIES FOCUSING ON **MAN-THING**, AN EXAMINATION OF THE QUESTION OF WHY RADIATION IS SO KIND TO MARVEL CHARACTERS, AND A SPECIAL UNSUNG HEROES DEDICATED TO ALL THE FANS! .......... 1.99

### QUICKSILVER NO. 5

TOM PEYER/DEREC AUCOIN

**QUICKSILVER IS IMPRISONED BY HIS UNCANNY IN-LAWS: THE INCOMPARABLE INHUMANS!** AND EVEN HIS WIFE **CRYSTAL** IS HELPLESS TO SET HIM FREE! IT'S ALL PART OF THE LATEST MASTER SCHEME OF THE MAD **MAXIMUS** AND THIS TIME, THERE'S AN EVEN MORE INSIDIOUS MANIPULATOR PULLING HIS STRINGS! .... 1.99

### SILVER SURFER NO.137

J.M. DEMATTEIS/TOM GRUMMETT/MATT RYAN

THE FINAL BATTLE! **MEPHISTO** AND **AGATHA HARKNESS** VS. **SCRIER** UNTIL THE SILVER SURFER JOINS THE FRAY! AND, IN SATORI, THE COSMIC MESSIAH COMES TO LIFE, SETTING INTO MOTION THE NEXT STORY-ARC FOR THE SURFER! ....... 1.99

# MARVEL IMPORTS

**ON SALE JANUARY 14**

## SPIDER-MAN: THE MANGA NO. 6

RYOICHI IKEGAMI

CONTINUING THE DARINGLY DIFFERENT, BIWEEKLY, BLACK-AND-WHITE, FULLY TRANSLATED MANGA ADVENTURES OF SPIDER-MAN! IT'S THE CONCLUSION TO "THE TRANSFORMATION OF DR. INUMARU" AS SPIDER-MAN BATTLES THE LIZARD FOR THE LIFE OF HIS CLASSMATE, ARAKI! . . . . . . . . . . . 2.99

**ON SALE JANUARY 21**

## X-MEN: THE MANGA NO. 1

VARIOUS

FOR YEARS, MARVEL LICENSED FOREIGN PUBLISHERS TO CREATE NEW COMICS FEATURING OUR MOST POPULAR CHARACTERS. NOW MARVEL INTRODUCES AN ALL-NEW AUDIENCE TO THESE BLACK-AND-WHITE STORIES, NOW TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH. IN THIS FIRST ISSUE, READERS WILL MEET THE GIRL NAMED JUBILEE AND SEE THE X-MEN THROUGH HER EYES AS SHE GETS PULLED INTO THE WORLD OF THE CHILDREN OF THE ATOM. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 2.99

**ON SALE JANUARY 28**

## SPIDER-MAN: THE MANGA NO. 7

RYOICHI IKEGAMI

"TOO STRONG A HERO" BEGINS AS A BIZARRE JAPANESE VERSION OF THE KANGAROO CHALLENGES THE WEB-SPINNER TO A BATTLE WITHIN THE SQUARED CIRCLE! THAT'S RIGHT, SPIDEY'S GONNA' WRASSLE! . . . . . . 2.99

# STRANGE TALES

**ON SALE JANUARY 7**

## WEREWOLF BY NIGHT NO. 2

PAUL JENKINS/LEONARDO MANCO

DESPERATE TO CURE HIMSELF OF HIS CURSE OF LYCANTHROPY, JACK RUSSELL SETS OFF ON A QUEST FOR THE THREE SCATTERED PIECES OF THE MYSTICAL WOLF AMULET. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 2.99

**ON SALE JANUARY 21**

## MAN-THING NO. 4

J.M. DEMATTEIS/LIAM SHARP

THE FORMER DEFENDER KNOWN AS DEVIL-SLAYER HAS GONE INSANE AND HIS EXTRA-DIMENSIONAL SHADOW-CLOAK IS SUCKING PIECES OF OUR REALITY INTO ITS DEMONIC CONFINES! . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 2.99

**ON SALE JANUARY 28**

## BLADE: CRESCENT CITY BLUES

CHRIS GOLDEN/GENE COLAN/MARK PENNINGTON

AT LONG LAST, BLADE GETS THE CHANCE FOR VENGEANCE THAT HE'S ALWAYS DREAMED OF! DOWN IN THE BIG EASY, BLADE UNCOVERS AN INSIDIOUS PLOT THAT AIMS TO REPLACE ORGANIZED CRIME WITH VAMPIRES! AND IT'S ALL MASTERMINDED BY THE BLOOD-SUCKER WHO KILLED BLADE'S MOTHER, DEACON FROST! . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 3.50

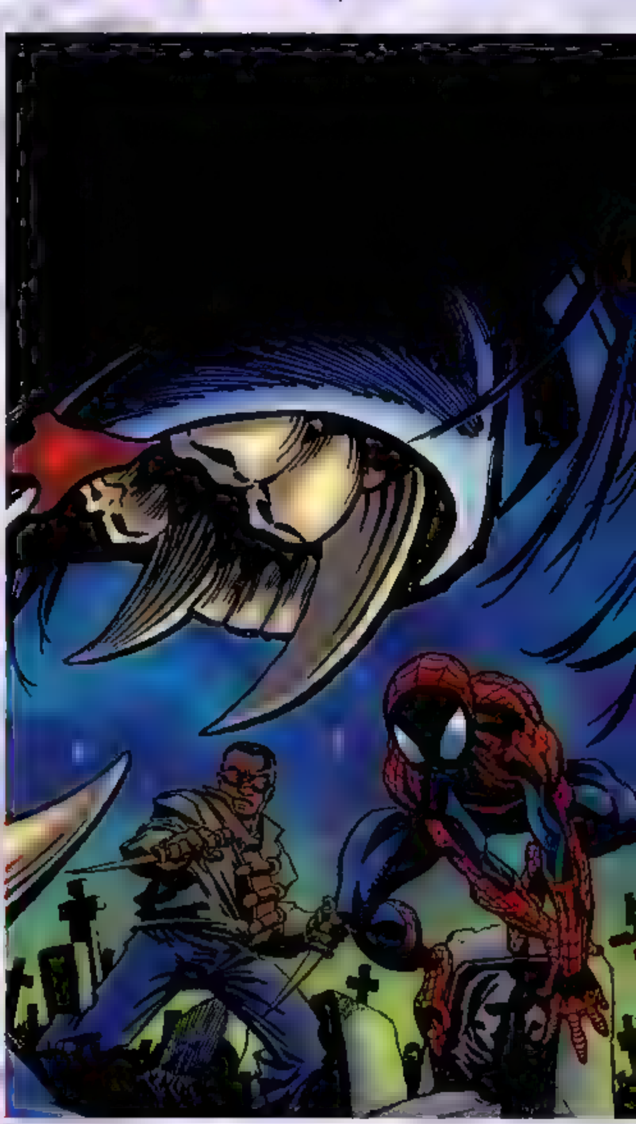
**ON SALE JANUARY 7**

SPIDER-MAN

## MARVEL TEAM-UP NO. 7
### STARRING SPIDER-MAN & BLADE

COVER BY SCOTT MCDANIEL
MARV WOLFMAN/TOM DERENICK/TOM PALMER

WHEN VAMPIRES USE ESU'S SCIENCE LABS TO CREATE AN ANTIDOTE TO THE EFFECTS OF THE SUN'S DEADLY RAYS, THEY'RE TRACKED TO THE BIG APPLE BY BLADE! . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 1.99



## THE SENSATIONAL SPIDER-MAN NO. 25

TODD DEZAGO/MIKE WIERINGO/RICHARD CASE
**"SPIDERHUNT" PART 1**
THE HEAT IS ON AND THE BOUNTY IS HIGH AS SPIDER-MAN FINDS HIMSELF THE MOST HUNTED MAN IN THE MARVEL UNIVERSE! LAST MONTH, IN PETER PARKER, SPIDER-MAN #88, A DEAD BODY WAS DISCOVERED WITH ITS NOSE AND MOUTH FILLED WITH WEB FLUID. NOW SPIDEY IS WANTED FOR MURDER AND HAS NO PLACE TO TURN! . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 2.99

**ON SALE JANUARY 14**

## THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN NO. 432

COVER BY STEVE SKROCE
TOM DEFALCO/JOHN ROMITA JR./BUD LAROSA
**"SPIDERHUNT" PART 2**
**CONTINUED FROM SENSATIONAL SPIDER-MAN #25!** AS SPIDER-MAN SEARCHES FOR THE KIDNAPPED GRANDSON OF HIS GREATEST ENEMY, THE REST OF THE CITY ATTEMPTS TO CASH IN ON THE FIVE MILLION DOLLAR REWARD ON OUR HERO'S HEAD! . . . . . . . . . . . 1.99

**ON SALE JANUARY 21**

## PETER PARKER, SPIDER-MAN NO.89

HOWARD MACKIE/JOHN ROMITA JR./SCOTT HANNA
**"SPIDERHUNT" PART 3**
**CONTINUED FROM AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #432!** WE'VE GOT GOOD NEWS AND BAD NEWS. THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT THE AMATEURS OUT TO COLLECT THE BOUNTY ON SPIDEY ARE OUT OF THE PICTURE. THE BAD NEWS IS THAT THE **BLACK TARANTULA** HAS LEFT THE WEB-SLINGER ON JUST THIS SIDE OF DEATH AND NOW THE PUNISHER IS ON THE SCENE! . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 1.99

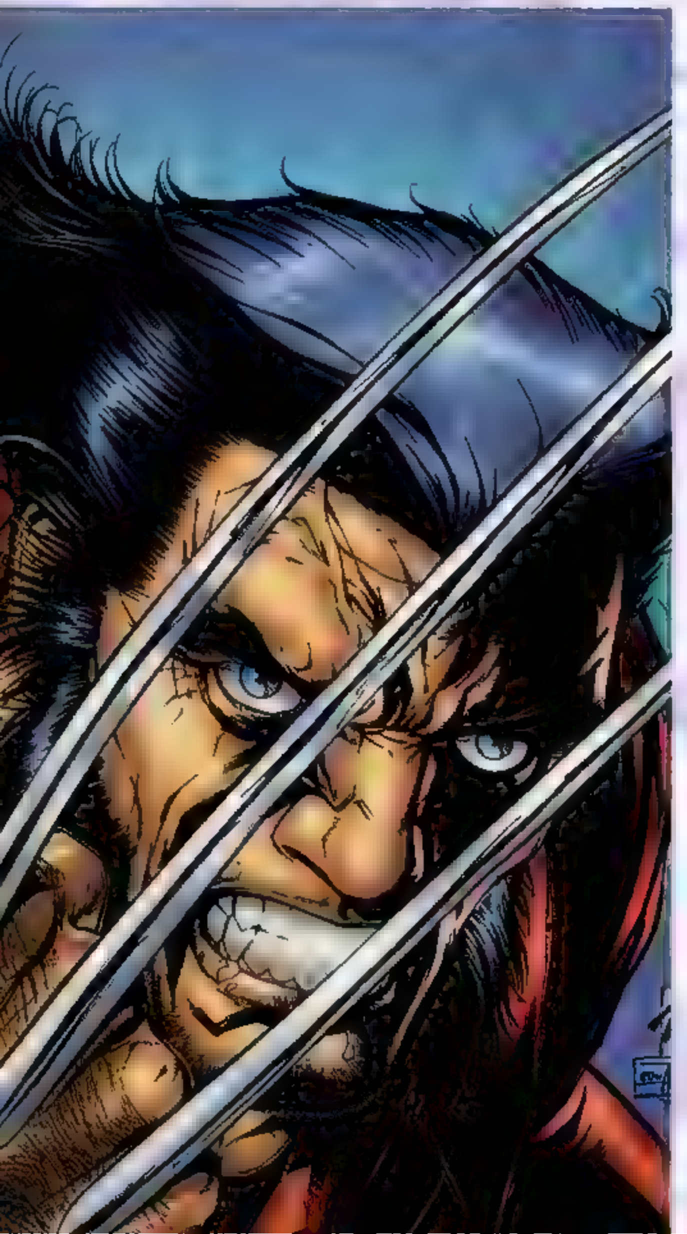
## SPIDER-MAN: HOBGOBLIN LIVES TRADE PAPERBACK

NEW COVER BY RON FRENZ
ROGER STERN/RON FRENZ/GEORGE P REZ,SCOTT HANNA & BOB MCLEOD
**COLLECTING THE LANDMARK LIMITED SERIES THAT REVEALED THE TRUE IDENTITY OF THE HOBGOBLIN!** WHEN JASON MACENDALE IS KILLED IN HIS JAIL CELL WHILE AWAITING TRIAL, IT BECOMES CLEAR THAT THE ONE AND ONLY *ORIGINAL* HOBGOBLIN IS STILL AT LARGE! . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 14.99

**ON SALE JANUARY 28**

## THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN NO.255

J.M. DEMATTEIS/LUKE ROSS/DAN GREEN
**"SPIDERHUNT" PART 4**
**DOUBLE-SIZED FINALE TO "SPIDERHUNT"!** AS BEATEN AND BATTERED AS HE'S EVER BEEN, SPIDER-MAN MUST SUMMON EVERY ONCE OF STRENGTH IN HIS BODY TO RESCUE THE KIDNAPPED GRANDSON OF HIS GREATEST FOE! AND TO GET TO LITTLE NORMIE, THE WEB-SPINNER MUST FACE THE ***ALL-NEW GREEN GOBLIN!***
. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 1.99



## ON SALE JANUARY 7

### CABLE NO. 52

JAMES ROBINSON/LADRONN & JOE CASEY/JUAN VLASCO

"THE HELLFIRE HUNT" PART 5 OF 6

THE QUEST TO HARNESS THE POWER OF APOCALYPSE NEARS ITS EXPLOSIVE END! CABLE AND IRENE HAVE TRACKED SEBASTIAN SHAW AND DONALD PIERCE TO REMOTE VILLAGE IN SWITZERLAND. BUT WHEN THEY FIND THEMSELVES HOPELESSLY OUTGUNNED BY THE INNER CIRCLE'S MERCENARY ARMY, THEIR ONLY HOPE MAY BE THE PERSON WHO WAS ONCE KNOWN TO THE WORLD AS MASTERMAN! .......... 1.99

### MAVERICK NO. 7

JORGE GONZALEZ/JIMMY CHEUNG/ANDREW PEPOY

IT'S SABRETOOTH VS. MAVERICK IN THE URBAN JUNGLE THAT IS NEW YORK CITY! WHILE TRYING TO STOP ELENA IVANOVA FROM EXACTING REVENGE AGAINST VICTOR CREED FOR THE MURDER OF HER MOTHER, MAV LEAPS INTO THE LION'S DEN! .......... 1.99

### UNCANNY X-MEN NO. 353

STEVE SEAGLE/CHRIS BACHALO/TIM TOWNSEND

IT'S THE DAWN OF A NEW ERA AS CHRIS BACHALO MAKES HIS PENCILING DEBUT! THINGS ARE CALMING DOWN IN SALEM CENTER, RIGHT? WRONG! THE X-MEN ARE BACK HOME, BUT THINGS ARE FAR FROM OKAY. IN THE WAKE OF GAMBIT'S TRIAL, AND SUBSEQUENT "DEPARTURE" FROM THE TEAM, ROGUE BURNS WITH ANGUISH AND AN OVERWHELMING DESIRE TO USE HER POWERS, NO MATTER THE PRICE! .......... 1.99

## ON SALE JANUARY 14

### GENERATION X NO. 36

LARRY HAMA/ANDY SMITH

THE FINAL FATE OF M! THE MYSTERIOUS BIOSPHERE LURKER IS BACK, PROVIDING THE KIDS AN ENTRYWAY INTO THE REALITY THAT HAS TAKEN SYNCH! NOW THE TEAM CAN BREACH THE VEIL, BUT CAN THEY RETRIEVE THEIR TEAM-MATE AND FIND A WAY TO "CURE" MONET WHO HAS MELDED WITH HER BROTHER, EMPLATE?! .......... 1.99

### X-FACTOR NO. 143

HOWARD MACKIE/DUNCAN ROULEAU/ART THIBERT

AT LAST, HAVOK MAKES HIS MOVE AGAINST THE DARK BEAST! AFTER MONTHS OF BUILD UP, ALEX SUMMERS PLAYS HIS HAND! WHEN THIS ISSUE ENDS, THE BROTHERHOOD WILL BE NO MORE AND A NEW AGE WILL HAVE DAWNED FOR X-FACTOR! .......... 1.99

## ON SALE JANUARY 21

### EXCALIBUR NO. 118

BEN RAAB/MELVIN RUBI

THE "CREATURES FROM THE SHADOWS" WHO HAVE BEEN TORMENTING LOCKHEED STRIKE! WHAT IS THEIR TRUE NATURE, AND HOW IS KITTY PRYDE HERSELF RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CREATION OF THESE DEMONIC CREATURES? .......... 1.99

### WHAT IF? NO.106

STARRING THE X-MEN

TOM DEFALCO/LEO FERNANDEZ

WHAT IF THE X-MEN CONDEMNED GAMBIT TO DEATH? SPINNING OUT OF THE "TRIAL OF GAMBIT" IN UNCANNY X-MEN #350, A GROUP OF X-MEN (INCLUDING WOLVERINE, PSYLOCKE, MARROW AND THE AVENGING ANGEL) PASS THE ULTIMATE JUDGEMENT ON THE RAGIN' CAJUN! BUT OTHER MEMBERS OF THE TEAM (LIKE STORM, ICEMAN AND ROGUE) DISAGREE WITH THE VERDICT! 1.99

## ON SALE JANUARY 21

### X-MAN NO. 36

TERRY KAVANAGH/CHRIS CROSS/BUD LAROSA

THE IDENTITY OF THE SCHEMER BEHIND THE SCENES OF NATE'S NEWFOUND POPULARITY IS REVEALED, AND HIS NAME IS THE PURPLE MAN! . . . . . . . . 1.99

### X-MEN NO. 73

JOE KELLY/CARLOS PACHECO/ART THIBERT

**MARROW** RETURNS TO THE SEWERS TO VISIT **CALLISTO**, AND FINDS THAT SOMEONE ELSE HAS BEEN AIDING HER MENTOR! THE QUESTIONS ARE: WHO AND WHY? AND AS **MAGGOTT'S** TRAINING BEGINS, A MYSTERIOUS DEATH IN SALEM CENTER IS UNCOVERED, AND THE VICTIM WAS EATEN TO DEATH! AND, WITH **BASTION** IN FEDERAL CUSTODY AND OPERATION: ZERO TOLERANCE SHUT DOWN, WHERE HAS **PROFESSOR X** DISAPPEARED TO? . . . . . . . . 1.99

## ON SALE JANUARY 28

### BISHOP: XAVIER'S SECURITY ENFORCER NO. 3 (OF 3)

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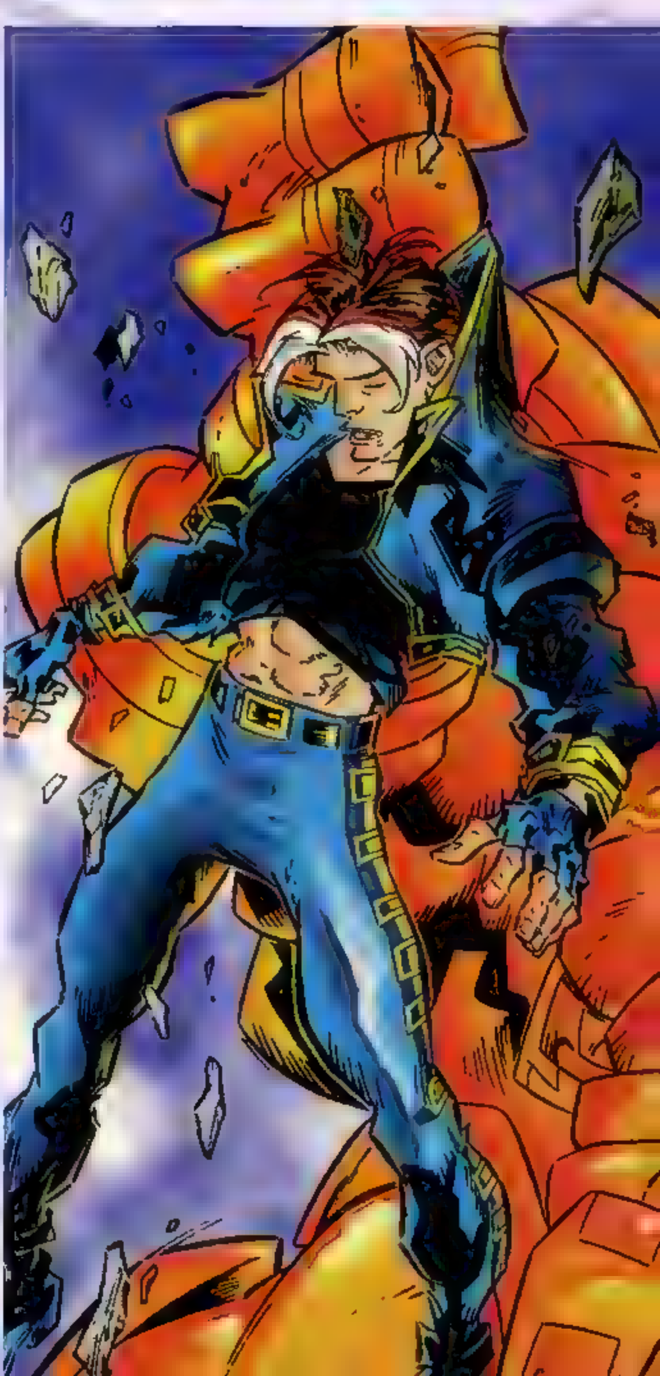
THEY'VE BROKEN OFF FROM THEIR LONGTIME COMMANDER, CABLE! IN A CROSS-COUNTRY ROAD TRIP, THEY'VE MANAGED TO GET INTO ALL KINDS OF TROUBLE, FROM THE VILLAINS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CAMP VERDE MASSACRE TO THE MOB! NOW THEY'RE CUTTING LOOSE IN THE ARIZONA DESERT AT A NO-HOLDS-BARRED FESTIVAL BUT WHAT STARTS OUT AS FUN IN THE SUN MAY TURN OUT TO BE THE LAST HURRAH FOR X-FORCE! IN THIS 75TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE YOU'LL SEE: **CANNONBALL** RETURN ONLY TO FIND EX-SQUEEZE **MELTDOWN** LETTING HER HAIR DOWN AND IN THE ARMS OF ONE OF HIS CLOSEST FRIENDS! **DANI MOONSTAR** USE HER POWERS AS SHE DID IN HER "MIRAGE" DAYS LEADING TO A FRIGHTINGLY TRANSCENDENT EXPERIENCE FOR **WARPATH! SIRYN** TOTALLY OUT OF HER ELEMENT! **SELENE!** AND THE IDENTITY OF THE MAN WHO HAS BEEN FOLLOWING THE TEAM IS REVEALED, AND HIS NAME IS **REIGNFIRE!** . . . . . . . . 2.99



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TOM DEFALCO/MARCELO FRUSIN

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